THE KILLEKYATHA

NOMADIC FOLK ARTISTS OF NORTHERN MYSORE

S. G. MORAB

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PREFACE

The Anthropological Survey of India organized a symposium on Research Programmes in Cultural Anthropology and Related Disciplines in 1967 (Sinha 1970) in which several projects undertaken by the various research workers were highlighted. One of the papers was by Misra (1970 : 151-93) which drew the attention of the social anthropologists to the need for studying nomadic communities moving in the Indian countrystide. During a brief reconnoitre in Andhra and Mysore States, he and his colleague came to know of eightyeight different nomadic and semi-nomadic groups. This interesting revelation made me ponder over studying a nomadic group. I, therefore, decided to undertake the study of a nomadic group in Karnataka State. For this purpose, I selected the Killekyatha community.

My thanks are due to Dr. S. C. Sinha, Director, Anthropological Survey of India, for providing me facilities to work on the nomadic people under the able guidance of Dr. P. K. Misra. I am extremely grateful to Dr. Misra whose constant encouragement enabled me to select the Killekyatha and work on them. I am thankful to Shri T. N. Pandit, Anthropologist, for going through some part of the report and givng useful suggestions. I wish to thank Shri S. C. Shankaran for taking several useful photographs printed in this book. I thank Shri Jambukeswar for some of the drawings included here. I thank Smt. A. R. Annapurna and Shri R. Srinivas for the pains taken to type the manuscripts. Last but not the least, I owe a heavy debt of gratitude to several Killekyatha of the village where I lived amidst them, who treated me affably, and without whose help and co-operation this work would not have been possible. As a token of gratitude I wish to dedicate this work of mine to the Killekyatha of Bijapur district in Mysore State.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE ARGUMENT

Though there are large number of groups of people in the world who lead a wandering life due to various ecological, economic and other considerations not much attention is given to conduct studies on nomadic societies. There are numerous nomadic groups in Eurasia, West Asia and Africa like the Lapps, Tungus, Yakut, Somoyeds, Koryak etc., and Eskimo—herderers of reindeer, cattle raising groups like Masai, Herero, Hottentot, several camel rearing groups such as Bedouin of Arab, Kurds of Turkish—Armenian plateau etc. It is interesting to note that in England and Wales there are some 15,000 nomads. These nomads own trucks to tow their wagons and some own cars also. They mainly deal with scrap metals, trade in horse, do seasonal agricultural work and engage in other occupations such as hawking, labour work, tinkering and forecasting (Misra 1968a).

In India there are large number of nomadic and semi-nomadic groups which follow varieties of occupations like trading in villages, forecasting, basket making, displaying snakes, bears, bulls and monkeys, acrobating, selling herbal medicines, smithery, entertaining, begging in the name of various deities, etc.[2] Despite existence of numerous nomadic groups in the country we have scanty information on them. Comprehensive and systematic information on the number of such groups and their population is not available. If a general estimate of the people leading nomadic life is to be made, we have to depend upon the figures given by the All India Nomadic Association which claims that the population of the nomadic and semi-nomadic communities in India as six millions (Misra, 1968a). The Census of India have information on those nomadic groups which are included in the lists of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. In view of the existence of large number of groups of people roaming in the countryside it is felt that detailed studies on them as regards their population, occupations followed, forms of nomadism, their social organization, etc., would serve useful purpose in dealing with the problems of nomadic people, and also open vista in understanding the general theoretical framework of nomadism *versus* sedentarization. I am using the word 'sedentarization' as a synonym to 'settled life'. I shall discuss about it later in this section and also in more detail in the chapter on the Processes of Sedentarization.

NOMADISM

Earlier writers associated nomadism with pastoralism. The word 'nomad' "... is of Greek origin (*nomas—ados*, meaning roaming about for pasture) and it referred to the people who lead a migratory life, have no fixed abode, tend and raise cattle" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1964). As discussed earlier there are large number of groups in India and other places (England and Wales) who do not tend or raise cattle unlike several groups in West Asia, but fit in with the description of nomadism like leading migratory life, having no fixed abode, and moving in search of subsistence. The term nomadism has, therefore, to be understood in a broader sense in order to include various forms of nomadism. Karder characterises the nature of nomadism and its forms in the following words : "Nomads are those people who have a fixed round of movement, whether seasonal, annual, or multi-annual ; they characteristically have a definite end-point to their movements over the surface of the earth, and a point of return. Thus, nomadism ins a cyclical or rhythmic movement. There are, by way of contrast, non-cyclical or non-periodic movements, such as, migrations, which are total displacements of habitat, exemplified in the movement of settlers from their homes in the old world to the new. Moreover, there are other kinds of nomads than the pastoralists ; nomadic hunting and gathering peoples, and nomadic farmers" (1959 : 499).

Though nomadism is understood in cyclical, or rhythmic movements in contrastive situations of non-cyclical, or non-rhythmic movements, there are several groups of people who may not come into the purview of Krader's description. There are groups of people who move some part of the year, move in groups, singly or together with a few members of the family for a certain part, or the whole of the year. It is in fact very difficult to say at what stage, as Misra (1970 : 152) says, a group can be called nomadic or settled.

TYPES OF NOMADISM

Bacon's three-fold classification (Misra, *ibid*) viz. true-nomads, semi-nomads, and semi-sedentary is based on the pastoral nomads. As Bacon's classification is useful in understanding the different forms of nomadism, I shall state here Baconian classification quoting from Misra : "According to Bacon, true nomads are those who dwell round the year in non-permanent dwellings and who practise no agriculture. Semi-nomads are those who plant a few crops at their base camps before moving out on seasonal migrations, but they normally live in portable dwellings round the year. The 'Semi-sedentary' lives in permanent villages during a part of the year and wanders for the rest of the period" (Misra, *ibid*).

Watanabe (1968) speaks of the residential shifts of nomadic groups in different seasons for describing nomadism. According to him, "A simple typology of three terms (nomadic, semi-nomadic, and sedentary) is not sufficient to describe the wide variety observed in patterns of residential shift" (Watanabe, *ibid* 69). He gives a classification of residential shift patterns of those termed as semi-nomadic. A feature common to all such people is settled life in winter. But such classification mostly applies to the food-gathering nomadic people like Ainu, Koryak and others as shown by Watanabe (*ibid*). So far as the nomadic groups whose movements are not guided by the seasonal criteria like shifts in summer and winter seasons are concerned, the residential shift pattern, perhaps, does not play any great role.

The word 'sedentary' is generally understood by scholars (Barth 1961 ; Krader 1959 ; Musham 1959 ; Pehrson 1966) as a synonym to 'settled people'. Misra (*ibid*), however, does not agree. He says that the word sedentary used for settled people was a misnomey. According to him, "It means only an inactive life, settled people in contrast to nomads do not necessarily lead an inactive life" (*ibid*, notes). The Webster Universal Dictionary (Wyld and Partidge 1970 : 1330) gives another meaning of the word as 'not moving' with reference to persons following sedentary habits, while giving also one of the meanings to the worpas stated by Misra. But if the term sedentarization is understood in the sense of transformation from nomadic life to settled life it would be useful in analysing the various processes of nomadism *vis-a-vis* sedentarization.

Musham (1959 : 539) identifies two types of sedentrarization, namely, 1. Spontaneous ; and 2. Initiated. In the spontaneous sedientarizattion there is a tendency of nomadic population concerned to restrict the frequency and scope of its migration, whereas in the initiated sedentarization the authorities initiate the entirety of economic, legal and similar measures in order to sedentarize the nomadic population. In the Indian context, while sedentrization of nomadic groups is being initiated in some form or the other, e.g. Gadulia Lohars of Rajasthan (Misra 1969 : 307-15), the process of spontaneous sedentarization is also noticeable.

Misra (1970 : 152) observes that semi-sedentary and semi-nomadic groups of Bacon's classification may be treated as identical, if the criterion of agricultural activity from the latter is removed. Alternatively, it is possible to consider both semi-sedentary and semi-nomads as identical, whether the criterion of agricultural activity is inculded or not, because there are several groups of people possessing lands and doing some kind of cultivation, yet they may be moving in the countriyside for consideable part of the year, e.g. Gondhali, Budbudike, etc. Further, there are groups who do not own lands but provide seasonal agricultural labour. Considering

these factors, semi-nomadic and semi-sedentary are considered here as identical terms.

STUDIES ON NOMADS

Among the full scale studies on the nomadic people apart from Sher Singh's study of the Sansis (1965) and Sikligar (1966) and a few studies by the research workers of the office of the Registrar General, Government of India, we have two studies on the nomadic Gadulia Lohars of Rajasthan (Ruhela 1968 ; Misra 1966). Ruhela's study on Gadulia Lohars is an ethnographic account of the people, whereas Misra's analytical study focuses attention on the problem of nomadism in the context of social, economic and political life of the nomadic community. His later work together with his colleagues, on Mysore City (Misra et al, 1971) and a few papers (1968, 1968a, 1970, 1971) have been a pioneering attempt in understanding nomadism in the context of Indian civilization.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

When a reconnoitre survey on nomadic and semi nomadic communities in parts of Mysore and Andhra Pradesh was made, Misra (1970 : 170-193) came to know of eightyeight different groups out of which forty groups were met. In view of the existence of large number of such groups the study of nomads was envisaged in the research proposals (Misra, *ibid* 161-64). A study of nomads of Mysore City was done as has been stated earlier. In this study, role performances of the various itinerant groups visiting a city has been described. The study also throws light on why a large number of opeple continue to lead nomadic life. Indeed, it is a moot question why a community continues to lead a nomadic life inspite of comparatively hazardous life of nomads. If a group moves what are the compelling reasons for it. Is it that a group takes to nomadic life mainly because of ecological and economic circumstances or is there any relevance for their values affecting them in their taking to nomadism ? Does any nomadic community want to settle down, and if so, under what condition ? These are some of the basic questions which need to be answered on the basis of empirical studies.

This study proposes to answer the above questions by taking the case of a nomadic community. In order to make the aspects of nomadism in this community clear, a detailed description of the social and economic life of this community has been provided.

SELECTION OF THE COMMUNITY

Misra's (1970) study shows that out of eighty-eight nomadic and semi-nomadic communities, the groups speaking Marathi and Telugu

languages as their mother tongue were found to be in greater number than other languages. The list of the government of Mysore(1967) provides forty-nine names out of which some of the nomadic groups like the Budubudiki, Gondhali, Killekyatha/Katabu—all Marathi-speaking groups—were found to be inter-marrying groups Gazetteer of Bijapur district, 1888). Among these groups the Killekyatha are distinctly different from others, as they are found to be preserving the traditional art of leather picture shows. It was considered helpful to select one of the groups which spoke Marathi as the mother tongue, and also knew the regional language. These considerations made me select the Killekyatha for an intensive study.

The Census of India 1961 (1966 : 244) records the population only of the Killekyatha as 2,807 since this group was enumerated under the category of Scheduled Castes. So far as the data on the population distribution of the Killekyatha or Katabu, or any of the 'Nomadic and Semi-nomadic Communities' areawise in Mysore State was concerned, no information was available. The Gazetteers of Dhyrwar, Belgaum, and Bijapur districts published between 1884 and 1888 give the population figures for the Killekyatha Katabu as 4,45,108, and 376 for these districts respectively. The figures for the community given by Enthoven (1922) was about 900 for the entire erstwhile Bombay State. Though the District Gazetteers recorded the information as complied in 1890's, these are the only source materials available as far as population data on the community is concerned. The Gazetteer of the Dharwar district gives the number as 445 but does not give the area of their distribution. The Bijapur District Gazetteer gives the number as 376 and also indicates their preponderance in Badami *taluka* of the district. With this clue in hand, when we made enquiries at Badami town, we got information that the Kalikapur (pseudonym) village had the largest number of families of the Killekyatha in the in the *taluka*. When we landed at the village, we found the existence of a settlement of the Killekyatha, and at the same time we got the information that many families lead nomadic life. These features were considered to be good enough for selecting Kalikapur village for the purpose of the study.

FIELD WORK

In the Killekyatha settlement of Kalikapur village I had conducted two field trips, one between February 24, 1970 and June 14, 1970, and the other, between May 20, 1971 and July 10, 1971 The data were collected by employing conventional anthropological methods such as participant observation, household survey, case studies, personal discussions and recording genealogies. Whenever nomadic families came to the village,

they were contacted. Data on some families were collected when I accompanied nomadic families at the time of marriage celebration.

I along with my senior colleague went to the Kalikapur village by taking an offcial of the Social Welfare Department deputed for the purpose in the office jeep. We were introduced to some leaders of the village including an elderly man of the Killekyatha community by the official who was well known to one of the sons of an influential leader of the village as the latter was a member of the Taluka Development Board. The official told them that we had gone there to study the Killekyatha and asked them to give every help to us. With this introduction we returned to the camp at the Taluka town on the same day. The next day we again went to the village. The influential man of the village soon arrnged for a house for my accommodation through some Killekyatha in their own settlement as I wanted to live in their midst. Though this had surprised some people. I was welcomed by the Killekyatha, as they thought I was going to arrange for some cash grants for building houses. The same evening my senior colleague left the place. Though many persons of the commounity were daily coming to talk to me for the first few days, they were mainly concerned with the purpose of my visit. They wanted to know why I was there, and why their community alone was selected for my study when there were several other groups living in the village. I had to face one stiff question whether I had anything to do concerning the Mysore-Maharashtra boundary dispute. At that time a violent agitation regarding implementation of the Mahajan Commission which had dealt with the dispute of the Mysore-Maharashtry and Mysore-Kerala State boundaries was going on in the near by Taluka town. My presence perturbed the Killekyatha, as they thought that I had gone there to arrange for their repatriation to Maharashtra State, since they spoke Marathi as their mother tongue. My answers did not convince them initially, but my knowledge of Marathi helped me to come out of the situation. Another important fact which had helped me to get the cooperation of several people was that the influential village elder had told them that I had gone there to study their art of leather picture shows and that their cooperation may help them at some time or other in getting encouragement from government.

At the initial stages, many persons were enthusiastically giving the required informatin, but my continued presence irked many Killekyathas. As my stay continued even after two months or so, several people started showing indifference. My stay in their own settlement, however, had made it possible for me to establish such a rapport that they could not countenance indifference for long. There were three persons who had not liked my prolonged stay. In the beginning they did not co-operate. One of them once told his son who used to visit my camp often that I was

not so simple as I looked to be and that I was a 'Nag Serpent' (Cobra) and may bite them any time. Once after lapse of a month or so of my stay, a 'saheb' (a person who is in government service and an educated man) of their community came to my camp and sat on the camp-cot though I was sitting on the floor, and made several queries about my objectives. I do not know how far he understood my explanation, but showed enough sympathy for me and the government for undertaking the trouble for studying them, he cautioned me to write only good things about them, which should help them to get some grants, housesites and lands to their people. Twice he visited my camp after that, and during both the trips he remined me about his concern for writing good things about them. The period of four months gave me enough opportunities to collect useful informtion relating to the study. After returning to the headquarters I wrote letters to all male membrs conveying the help rendered to me by one and all including elderly women mentioning their names. When I went to the field for the second time, I had not much difficulty. The house which I had occupied my previous field trip was restored to me from the owner who on my arrival left the village for movement, a bit earlier than his scheduled programme, so as to facilitiate me to stay in his house. This time there was more understanding. Even those who had shown indifference in the previous trip became friendly and I was able to collect the required data in an atmosphere of co-operation. I was more concerned with those families who were moving in the countryside for some part of the year. When the household survey was made and the sketch of the settlement was drawn, there was information on the 46 families as actually belonging to the Kalikapur village. Among them members of 27 families were found to be moving in the villages in some part or the whole of the year. A schedule was canvassed for those families stated to be leading nomadic life. I was able to complete in all 20 schedules out of the 27 families during the course of my two field trips—nearly, three-fourths of them during the second field trip only. Out of the seven families, two families could not be contacted as they did not return to Kalikapur during my stay. Of the remaining five, schedules of two families remained incomplete as the concerned informatnts had left the village in the middle of my enquiry and thy did not return to the village during the tenure of my field work. There were two families which consisted of only women and minor children and they used to move along with their uncle and hence the data of the latter were considered sufficient for the purose. In one ca e the schedule was not cavnassed, as the family had taken to nomadism only recently, that is, in 1971, though the family was considered nomadic for the purpose of our study. In case of women, many women tried to avoid answering questions in the betinning, but after I had attended a marriage ceremony held in a distant place, elderly women began to provide

the required information at the fag end of the first field trip. There wa also cooperation from the women during the second field trip.

THE SETTING

The Kalikapur village is situated at a distance of 18 miles from the Taluka town of Badami in the Bijapur district of Karnataka State. The village is multi-ethnic in character. The numerical dominance is of the Lingayats and the Kurbuba (shepherd) caste with a fair representation of the Killekyatha. The village is well connected by buses plying from Hubli, Dharwar, Saundathi, Belgaum, Bagalkot, Nargund, Ramdurg and Badami towns. A castewise population census was taken in 1971 and the figures are given in the following table.

Among the nomadic people, there are several groups which may not always take recourse to moving in one group. In such cases, certain individual families may move while some individuals may lead settled life. Basing on ethnographic reports, Watanabe observes "....among many of northern hunters there are some non-moving, sedentary individuals or families who occupy the same dwelling all the year, while there are others who shift their residence. Such variation of residential stability is correlated with differentiation in subsistence economy at the level of the individual or the family" (*ibid*, 73). When I camped at Kalikapur village, I noticed that the entire group of the Killekyatha did not move. It may be seen from the following description of the Killekyatha settlement of Kalikapur that there were non-moving Killekyatha families as well as several individual families taking recourse to moving.

The settlement where the Killekyatha live in the village is called 'Killekyathar Vathar'. The settlement is situated on the fringe of the village bordering the settlement of the Harijans (Ashedar and Madar castes). Its position, therefore, indicates that the Killekyatha were later immigrants to the village. Houses of two families whose members are living at other places since the heads of these families are in government service are lying locked. Two houses have fallen owing to their owners leaving the settlement, and they are in a dilapidated condition. As already stated, when the household survey was done, 45 families were found to have houses and house-sites. Out of the 46 families, 27 families gave information to the effect that they lead nomadic life for some part of the whole of the year. 19 families stated that they have been living at Kalikapur village for some years. But it is important to note that the classification into nomadic and settled families is not rigid as the families which move may suddenly switch on to settled life, and similarly, a settled one may start moving. The case of Ramappa (psedudonym) illustrates this. In 1970, he was living in Kalikapur, but in 1971, he started moving, leaving his house

locked as he had incurred heavy debt for excessive drinking. Another elderly person, Hanumappa, who lead a nomadic life, has now settled down for five years. Generally, old people and women show a tendency of living at Kalikapur settlement, and the younger ones are more prone to lead a nomadic life. For my analysis here, I have considered those families which did not undertake *halli sanchar* (moving in villages) during the last three years (1969 to 1971) as settled ones, and those families which spent some part or whole of the year on *halli sanchar* as nomadic families. I may hasten to add here that the classification is done solely for the purpose of the present description, and sucha rigid classification cannot be envisaged because settled families may become nomadic and *vice versa*, as already stated.

When a group of 3-4 families of the Killekyatha came to Kalikapur, the village leaders consisting of Kshatriya, Kuruba andLingayat communities gave them places for building their huts on the outskirts of the village, as the people were welll-versed in the art of leather picture shows. It is said that the Killekyatha were initially encouraged by the then Khatriya headman, as these people were found to be bodily strong, besides being good leather picture showmen and it was considered advantageous to have support of strong people who would help them when needed. A few of their kin from other villages later migrated to Kalikapur village. The economic and political importance of the Kshatriya leaders is said to have dwindled, and the was the emergence of a Lingayat richman (*sahukar*) who has been a dominating influence in the village scene for the past 20-25 years or so. The Killekyatha were helped by the Lingayat richman of the village by giving them agricultural labour work in the fields, or casual labour work, and other pettygobs. The Lingayat richman and his associates (mainly his kin) encouraged some of the Killekyatha who were moving in the villages to settle down at the village. The earlier migrants were able to buy a few acres of lands with the help of both Kashtriya and Lingayat leaders. By 1930's a young man (who died in 1971) among the Killekyatha came to limelight who not only reformed their traditional art of Leather picture shows which was then considered to be 'indecent', but became a famous exponent (*kirtankar*) of Nijaguna Sivayogi's[6] Kaivalya system. This person earned reputation in several neighbouring talukas. He was found to be closer to the Lingayat richman of the village. The leaders of the village, particularly the richman, have been persuading the Killekaytha to settle down in the village. The settled Killekaytha are of immense help to the richman of the village. There are four Killekaytha elders among the settled ones who take active part in canvassing for the party and candidates supported by the village richman during elections of all kinds. Sometimes they along with other members of their community, take sides in support of the richman in case of disputes. It was observed that the

highest authority to settle intra-community disputes among them was the Lingayat richman. Thus, on the strength of the village Lingayat leaders, the Killekaytha have consolidated their position and they have been able to demarcate a separate area where they live as a separate entity. Whether moving or sedentary, the individual families have their claims in the settlement as shown in the settlement map.

With this brief introduction on the Killekyatha community I shall proceed to give their historical background in the next chapter, followed by the description of their economic organization, area of movement, their values and worldview, aspects of their social and religious life, process of sedentarization in the succeeding chapters. I shall describe the trends change among the people very briefly in the last chapter.

NOTES

1. For preparing this section I have depended upon the material contained in the various papers of Dr. P. K. Misra, as given in the references.

2. Occupational roles of the itinerant groups are elaborately discussed by Misra (1970).

3. UNESCO, International Social Science Journal 1959, Vol. No. 4 contains articles by Abouzeid, Monteil, Krader and Musham, who have highlighted the aspects of sedentarization of nomadic groups.

4. For a brief review on the work on nomads of India, and outside India, See Misra (*ibid*).

5. Watanabe (1968 : 73) notes that among the food gathering nomadic people there are sedentary persons who appear to be less able bodied, the aged, and women.

6. Nijaguna Sivayogi (about A.D. 1500) was a composer of Kannada Songs. He wrote on Veerasaiva philosophy. Though he belonged to Kollegal in the South of the Karnataka State, his *Keertanas* (compositions) and *Charanas* (stanzas) became popular in the northern parts of that state where Veerasaivism has flourished as a main religious sect among the rural masses.

CHAPTER II

THE KILLEKYATHA AND THEIR BACKGROUND

The Killekyatha are referred to by various names, such as, Kiliket, Katabu (Enthoven 1922 ; Bijapur District Gazetteer 1888), Killikyatha (Nanjundayya and Iyear 1930 ; Thurston 1909) Killiaketar or Chhatri (Dharwar District Gazetteer 188), Gombe Rama (Paramasivaiah 1972). The Government of Mysore (1967) have used the terms like Sillekyatha, Killekyatha, and Katabu. The 'Sillekyatha', 'Killekyatha' and 'Katabu' and one and the same group of people. The 'Sillekyatha' are listed in the category of Scheduled Castes for the areas of the erstwhile Mysore province while the 'Killekyatha' and 'Katabu' are listed in the catogory of Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities by the state government. As the state Government has used the spelling 'Killekyatha', I am using the same spellig for the Killekyatha community which was described by different spellings as stated above.

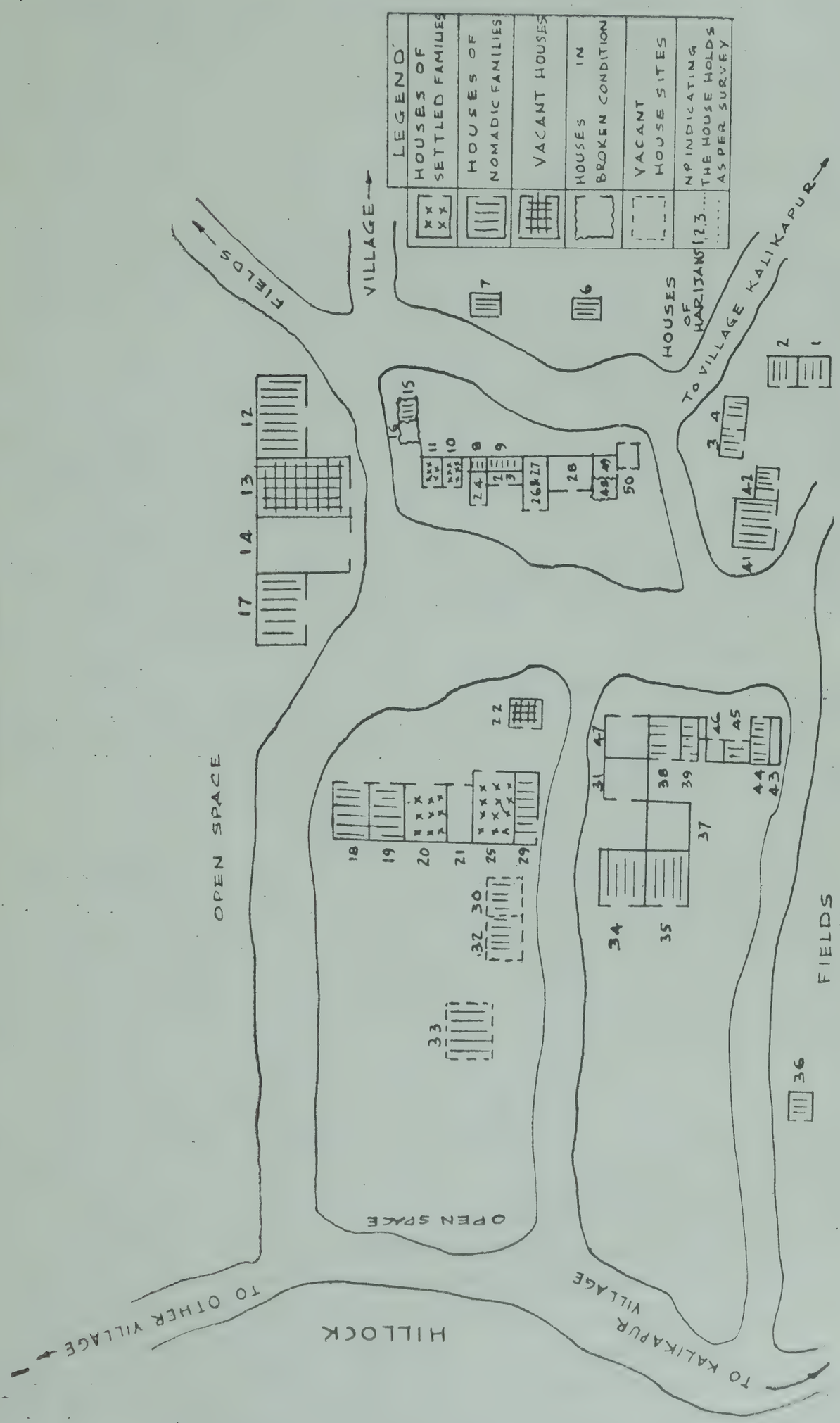
The Killekyatha are known to be the leather picture showers (*togalu gombe atadavaru*). The leather picture shows were once very popular in rural areas, and the Killekyatha depended mainly on it for their livelihood. With the passage of time, and avaiability of other modes of entertainments like the cinema, drama, etc. the popularity of the leather picture shows is said to be on the decrease. Along with the leather picture shows they were also performing the job of 'Fastening Selvage of blankets' and other materials. In the Dharwar, Bijapur and Belgaum districts of the State the Killekytha follow the occupations as stated above, but in central Mysore they follow fishing as one of their main callings. Therefore they are known as Burude Bestas. Largely, the Killekyatha have been found to go on movement for the purpose of carrying on their economic activities.

ORIGIN OF KILLEKYATHA

While describing the origin of the word 'Killekyatha', Nanjaundayya and Iyear state, "Killekyata means a mischievous imp, *Kille* meaning mischievous, and *kyata* imp, or a crooked fellow" (1930 : 516). It is argued that in their leather picture shows, the Killekyatha introduce a symbolic comic character with a pot belly, peculiar nose, which is known as Sillekyata with a typical woman character named Bangarakka as his wife in order to provide fun to the audience. On account of the Sillekyata character, it is said that the people have been known by that name. The Killekyatha of Bijapur district employ comical characters which are called by such names as Galya Dhulya, Jutya, Magiya, Gobya, Bhadravva,

Table 1 : *Population composition of the different ethnic groups of Kalikapur village*

Sl. No.	Name of the Caste (Alphabetical Order)	Number of households	Traditional Occupation	Population Male	Population Female	Population Total
1	Ambiga	1	Fisherman (Boatman)	2	3	5
2	Are Kumbar	2	Blacksmith	9	10	19
3	Ashedar	9	Agricultural Labourer	25	37	62
4	Brahmin	1	Priest	2	—	2
5	Dasar	1	Temple Servant	5	4	9
6	Iliga	2	Toddy tapper	7	6	13
7	Killekyatha	46	Leather picture shower etc.	109	97	206
8	Korava	2	Basket Marker and musician	7	4	11
9	Kshatriya	13	Landlord	37	27	64
10	Kshatriya Pujar	2	Priest of the village goddess	4	3	7
11	Kuruba	54	Shepherd	158	136	294
12	Lingayat					
	1. Jangam	11	Priest	25	32	57
	2. Banjiga	53	Trader	168	149	317
	3. Panchamasale	15	Peasant	44	42	86
	4. Sivasimpi	1	Tailor	4	1	5
	5. Kumbar	4	Potter	12	9	21
	6. Agasa	1	Washerman	1	2	3
	7. Hadapada	2	Barber	8	5	13
13	Madar	15	Village servant	51	43	94
14	Naik Makkalu	13	Village servant	50	38	88
15	Panchal	14	Artisan (Carpenter smith, goldsmith)	51	36	87
	Others	4	—	9	14	23
16	Mislim					
	Total	266		788	698	1,486



Sketch of Killekyatha Vathar of Kalikapur Village

Irakka, etc. Such characters besides creating fun, induce certain a nount of morals, such as, 'doing good to others', 'not cheating', etc. It is said that formerly the language used in their shows tended to be vulgar in depicting comical characters, and on account of it women were verse to attend their shows. But the position has since changed owing to one of their leader's reformatory measure which will be explained later.

A Killekyatha elder of Kalikapur village who had taken interest in finding out the orign of the word did not agree to the explanation of the word signifying 'mischievous imp', as stated above. He explained that since they spoke Marathi, the origin had to be searched in that language. According to him, the word 'Killekyatha' was to be understood in the Marathi pronunciation of 'Khel Ket' meaning 'One Performing Plays'. Another Killekyatha tried to link the word with 'Kali Khyata' that is 'famous in Kali Age'—famous for their plays. But it is not known how the word originated. The term in Kannada is a synonym for any kind of mischievous acts of people. Acts of any person whose behaviour is mischievous are likened to the shows of a Killekyatha who employs comical characters evokig fun and mishief in his leather picture shows.

The depiction of comical and mischievous characters in their shows, pherhaps, has lead other people to associate the word 'Killekyatha' as synonym to 'mischievous people'. The Killekyatha do not like to be referred by this term. They try to trace their descent to Maratha or Kshatriya ancestry.

PLACE OF ORIGIN

Original place of the Killekyatha is not known. Enthoven writing about their place of descent and rank states, "Kilikets or Katabus, also known as Chhatris .... are a caste of wandering beggers recruited from many castes notably, Bagdis, Budbudkis, and Gondhalis. They claim descent from a Kshatriya who is aid to have followed the Pandavas in their wanderings after the loss of their kingdom, and hence style themselves Chhatris. But an examination of their manner and customs tends to show that they are recruited from several castes in the Karanatak with no claim to Kshatriya rank" (1922 : 231). Nanjundayya and Iyer quote the Belgaum district gazetteer to say that, "the Killekyatas are immigrants into the state from the Mahratta country, to which they are believed to have come from the north, either from Kolhapur of Satara" (1930 : 517). The Bijapur district gazetteer, however, has the following to say : "They appear to have long belonged to the district, as they have no tradition of having moved from any other country. The oldest paper that has been found in their possession, is a deed of *Sannad* dated the month of *Kartik*, or October —November of 930 *Fasli*, that is, A.D. 1520, in the regin of the second King of Bijapur" (quoted, Nanjundayya and Iyer, *ibid*).

It is interesting to note that the Gazetteer of Satara, Kokhapur and Sholapur districts of Maharashtra State bordering the Belgaum and Bijapur districts of Mysore State (written between the years 1884-1888) do not mention the Killekyatha or Katabu communities. In Maharashtra State, we come across reference to a caste known as 'Chitrakathi'—picture showmen (Poona District Gazetteer : 448-449). The name of this caste is derived from *Chitra*—a picture, and *Katha*—a story, because they show pictures of heroes and gods and entertain their audience by telling them stories from the epics. But these people appar to be different from the Killekyatha as they use painted pictures during their narration and sell them stories from the epics. But these people appar to be different from the Killekyatha as they use painted pictures during their narration and sell them. They also use, wooden dolls for their shows. They differ in their social organization from the Killekyatha. The Killekyatha's use of leather pictures, and their absence in the neighbouring districts of Maharashtra State might, perhaps, corroborate the account of the Bijapur District Gazetteer to say that the Killekyatha might have belonged to the Bijapur district. But it appears that they might have once belonged to Maharashtra and migrated southwards.

Enthoven (*ibid*) states that the Killekyatha were also known as Chhatris, and at the same time he asserts that they were recruited from several castes in the Karnatak with no claim to Kshtriya rank. Nanjundayya and Iyer (*ibid*) point out that they were originally Mahratta Okkaligas following then the profession of agriculture but later they were associated with the caste of Goldsmith. They narrate the interesting story thus : "It is said that one of their (Mahratta Okkaligas) women became intimate with a man of the Goldsmith caste named Kattare Kalachari and had seven sons by him. They were, of course, put out of caste, and the smith taught his sons to make dolls out of mats, leaves and pieces of leather, and earn their living by exhibiting marionettes before villge audiences. The brothers of the woman, who were poor, were induced to join their nephews subsequently, and they formed a separte caste by themselves, reinforced by other accessions. It was after this that they migrated to different parts of Southern India" (Nynjundayya and Iyer, *ibid*, 517-8).

From the elderly Killekyatha informants it was gathered that they were the Marathas who migrated from Maharashtra during the time of Sivaji, and were the secret agents along with other nomadic groups like the Gondhali and Budbudiki. While they used the leather pictures for their livelihood, the Gondhali used to perform dance and narrate legendary stories, and the Budbudiki lived on forecasting through the help of some bird. All the three groups speak Matathi and in physical appearance resemble Marathi speaking communities closely. Whatever

the claim of the Killekyatha may be, the word has unfortunately acquired a derogatory sense. Educated among them refrain from using the term with their surnames. An interesting case of an educated Killekyatha who is working in police department deserves mention here. When this person was studying in school at Bagalkot, the teacher had told him not to use 'Killeketer' as his Surname. The word, a long with the term Katabu, were then applied to people of low status, and also to those having crminal habits. The teacher had, teherefore, induced the boy to change his surname. The boy did not know that other name he should have. When he sought the advice of the teacher, the latter had told him to see the Map of India and to tell the name of a place written in bold letters. He told the name of Amritsar in Punjab. A corrupted form of Amritsar is given to the boy as his Surname, which still continues. His elder brother occasionally uses the surname when outsiders ask him, or when required for purposes of recording. So far as the Killekyatha of Kalikapur are concerned, the Surname of 'Killeketer' is still used. But many a Killekyatha prefer to use other surnames. For instance, when three women representatives from the Killekyatha were selected by the women's council (*akkana balaga*) or Kalikapur, to undergo short training at the Gramsevika Training Centre at Dharwar, they gave 'Marathi' as their surname, and their certaificates, after the said training was over, indicated, Marathi'as Surname along with their personal names. Another instance was brought to my notice. A person who belongs to Mudhol taluka in Bijapur district, and whose surname was 'Katabu' changed it to 'Sindhe', which is indicative of Surnames of Maratha community in Maharashtra and Mysore States.

Though the earlier works cited before link Killekyatha to Chhatris or Kshatriyas, it was noted that they were not found to be associating themselves with these groups. Rather they claim Maratha or Kshtriya origin. They often call themselves people belonging to Pandava (Mahabharat) ancestry. They try to justify their claim by saying that since they are the tellers of the stories of the Pandavas through their leather picture shows. Beyond this they have neither any traditions, nor any evidence for proving their claim. The art of leather picture shows, however, has a history of several centuries, but it is not known when the Killekyatha have taken to it.

LEATHER PICTURE SHOWS

The leather picture shows are termed as 'shadow plays' (Jayadev 1964 : 25) as it is stated that the sharp black and white shadows of flat leather figure are thrown on a screen illuminated from behind. But the technique employed in the art of leather picture shows is that the flat leather pictures are made to shine on the white translucent screen due to the light falling from behind thereby the objects themselves become distinctly

visible to the audience. It may be noted that the leather pictures are brought very close—sometimes they are pinned to the translucent screen. The stage is covered with blinkets from all the four sides. The light is so arranged that the white translucent screen is iluminated from behind which helps the flat leather pictures in coluors, which are also of translucent character to shine distinctly as their shadows merge with the objects themselves. The colours painted on the flat leather pictures brighten as the light is thrown from behind and thus give specific effect on the screen. The main object of the Killekyatha artists is to display coloured leather pictures on the translucent screen and also to manipulate them during their plays by arranging sets on screen, and displaying was scenes etc. The artistis take special care to see that nowhere shadow of any part of his person falls on the screen. Due to its specialised nature of display of coloured leather pictures, I am of the opinion that it would be appropriate to use the term 'leather picture shows' as the people would call them so (*togalu gombe ata*), and not 'shadow plays' which, perhaps, may not be an apt phraseology in the context of the Killekyatha's art.

Writing about the history of leather picture shows (*togalu gombeyata*), Sivappa (1970) states that the art of leather picture shows was in a better shape during the time of Pallava and Kakatiya dynasties. The Andhra Pradesh had given shelter to this art during the 3rd century B.C. There are references to leather picture shows in such classic works as *Silappadikaram*, *Tilakamanjari*, *Panchadasi*, *Arjunvah*, etc. In Karnatak saints like Channa-basaweswar, Kanakadasa have referred to leather picture shows which give an indication to the prevalence of the art by the 12th century A.D. In South India, the leather picture shows still prevail in many parts. In Andhra Pradesh it is known as 'Tole Bommalata', in Tamil Nadu 'Tol Bommalattam', and in Kerala State it is called as 'Tol Pavakoottua'. Orissa's 'Ravana Chhaya' and Jawa's 'Vayang Kulat' are considered to be the variants of the leather picture shows.

Three different styles are in practice in the leather picture shows according to Paramasivaiah (1972), which are, viz. 1) Badagala Paya (mostly in north Karnatak ; 2) Tankala Paya (Old Mysore area) ; and 3) Mudala Paya (Karnatak-Andhra Pradesh borders). But so far as the Killekyatha whom I studied are concerned, they are not aware of any distinct style. The artists of leather picture shows have been using musical instruments like the harmonium and *tabla*, as accompaniments in order to make their shows attractive. Some of the tunes of popular cinemas are used now-a-days by them. It may be noted that since this traditional art requires skill, training from childhood both for narrrating puranic stories, manipulating leather pictures, and singing is required. As it also requires aptitude to lern the art only a few can learn it so as to make it as their traditional profession. Very few families in Kalikapur have retained the art.

One Ramappa's family has earned fame now. Ramappa's eldest son Kesyappa is a buddng artist. As he has learnt harmonium playing some drama companies had offered him 'place' in their companies, but he did not like to take up job in such companies. Ramappa's another son is proving to be a good company to his father in singing. Audience like to hear the son more than the father. Such is his proficiency. Among the Killekyatha of Kalikapur, there are four families how claim to be the artists. they also possess leather pictures.

The art of leather picture shows in Karnataka state has remained in the hands of a few persons belongng to the Killekyatha community. The art is gradually losing its importance as a traditional folkart with the impact of the cinema. Once their leather picture shows were popular . An old man in Dharwar city, when he saw the cinema for the first time, said, 'Oh , it (cinema) is the show of our Killekyatha' (quoted by Sivappa, *ibid*, 53). Owing to the popular response to the cinema and other forms of entertainment on the one hand, and attitude of indifference by the rural people on the others, the artists have been compelled to take other occupations 'leaving their boxes containing leather pictures to water'. We shall describe in the next chapter the economic aspects of traditional folk art, and also economic pursuit of the Killekyatha with reference to their nomadic way of life.

NOTES

1. The leather picture shows of the Killekyatha, according to the Dharwar District Gazetteer, (P. 153) were so indecent that the then Bombay Government had forbidden their performances in public places.

2. The three regional styles of the leather picture shows have been described in greater details by Paramasivaiah (1972).

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

My attempt in this section is to describe the various economic activities of the Killekyatha and to show how far their economic pursuits comple them to lead nomadic life.

Among the 46 families, 27 families are regarded as nomadic and 19 families as settled for our analysis. The occupations followed by both the sections are shown in the following Tables 2 and 3, and it would be interesting to discuss the occupations of people belonging to each of the sections.

It may be noted from Table 2 that men's occupations principally comprise 1. Repairing metal pots, 2. Fastening salvage of blankets, 3. Leather picture shows, and 4. Agricultural labour. Women are primarily engaged in 1. Stitching quilts and 2. Domestic work. Among the subsidiary occupations, besides the above two occupations, women have the occupations of Tattooing and Buffalo rearing.

From Table 3 it may be noted that the main occupations followed by men are agriculture and agricultural labour. The subsidiary occupations chiefly are agriculture and casual labour but large number of them having 'none' in this category. Women are found to be doing mainly domestic work and stitching quilts, with cases of attending to the work of agricultural labour also. Among the subsidiary work stitching quilts, buffalo rearing, domestic work and agricultural labour are followed by almost half of the women, and the remaining half are not found to be doing any subsidiary work.

The specialized occupations which have relevance on the nomadism of the Killekyatha have been dealt here in some length.

TRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS

Since several generations the Killekyatha have been chiefly following such occupations like fastening selvage of blankets, and leather picture showing by men, and stitching quilts and tattooing by women, which may be considered as their traditioal occupations.

FASTENING SALVAGE OF BLANKETS (*Kara Kattuvada*)

In the villages of Bijapur, Dharwar, Belgaum and in their neighbouring districts the rural folk use balankets made of woollen (*kambli*) and cotton sheets (*chadar*) for their covering while sleeping especially during winter

Table 2 : *Main and subsidiary economic activities of the nomadic* families sexwise

Occupational Categories	Number of persons and occupations followed										
	Repairing metalled pots	Fastening selvage of blankets	leather picture shows	Agri-cultural labour	stitching quilts	Domestic work	Tatoott-ing	Buffalo rearing	Fishing	none	total
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Men											
(*i*) Main	15	13	5	7	—	—	—	—	1	2	43
(*ii*) Subsidiary	1	4	4	9	—	—	—	—	1	24	43
2. Women											
(*i*) Main	—	—	—	2	13	23	—	—	—	1	39
(*ii*) Subsidiary	—	—	—	1	9	9	3	2	—	15	93

(*Note* : 1. Those below ten years of age are not included here.
2. Those studying in schools are not included here).

Table 3 : *Main and Subsidiary economic activities of the settled families sexwise*

Occupational Categories	Number of persons and occupations followed									
	Agriculture	Agricultural labour	Business	Casual labour	stitching quilts	Buffalo rearing	Domestic	Others	none	total
1. Men										
(*i*) Main	8	6	1	2	—	—	—	1	1	19
(*ii*) Subsidiary	—	4	—	5	—	—	—	1	9	19
2. Women										
(*i*) Main	—	2	—	—	6	—	15	1	1	25
(*ii*) Subsidiary	—	2	—	—	4	3	4	—	12	25

Note : 1. Those below ten years of age are not included here.
2. Those studying in schools are not included here.

season. The selvages (*kare*) of the *Kambli* and Chadar are not stitched when they are made at the looms and mills as a result of which the threads of wool and cotton get loosened and torn. The threads at both the selvages need to be fastended by stiching or weaving so that the original threads do not come out, ahd thus the materials last longer.

The Killekyatha have taken up the special art of fastening salvages of blankets since long. Those individual families who have taken up the job go to villages for providing this service. They go on announcing their arrival in villages by saying 'Kari Kattu Kambli (fastening salvages of blankets)' and when find customers, bargain the charages for the service, and set to do the job, usually, in front of the house or in the verandah of the house, if any.

For the operation of the fastening salvages of blankets, two persons are required. The nomadic Killekyatha move with their wives and younger children. Wives assist their husbands in the work. To make their work more attractive, coloured threads are used for fastening the selvages. Threads, white and coloured, are bought from the shops at the towns like Ramdurg, Nargund, Hubli, Dharwar, Gadag, Badami, Saundatti.

The thin threads bought from shops are twined by means of a bobbin (*takli*) and made into spools. The operation is done by maunally interweaving the thread-ends of the blankets etc., with those used by the Killekyatha. Both sides of the material require such fastening. The time taken for such work is half an hour. The charges for each blanket or Chadar are usually between seventy Paise to Rupee one. Some part of the money is spent for the raw materials i.e., threads used. If one gets nearly 5-6 such work, then one can maintain his family for that day. Unless one can not think of saving any money. Their experience shows that the quantum of work they get is not always more than eight to ten, and thus the job is able to provide them with bare subsistence.

LEATHER PICTURE SHOWS (*gombe ata*)

The existence of leather picture shows of the Killekyatha as a folk art has already been discussed. The Killekyatha folk artists possess large number of leather pictures which they use during their nocturnal shows. The pictures of epic hereoes are carved into leather by a special technique and local colours are given to them. The Killekyatha who perform the shows are adopt in manipulation of leather pictures in accordance with their oral story telling and music. The stories narrated are from epics, usually at the request of the audience. In between the epical narration, they include certain local comics and satires to evoke laughter from the audience.

As already stated in chapter two, it may be noted that the language used in earlier days tended to be fulagar and hence women did not attend their shows. But men enjoyed vulagar jokes. By 1930's however, an enlightened elder reformed the language part of it, and also introduced musical instruments like harmonium, *tabla*, and cymbols discarding their traditional drum (*dhol*) and a piple (*turar*) mode of a bamboo pipe with the covering of spiders web (*jedana pare*). It is said that once this elder had stunned the audience by giving a discourse on 'Bhagavadgita' for nearly two hours when he was showing a playrelating to the battle of Kurukshetra of Mahabharat. But such a skill he alone had possessed. Among the Killekyatha of Kalikapur one family has retained its tradition with two of its members practising the art. Three other members are the disciples of the elder. Four members profess to know the art which they have taken up as subsidiary occupation, but they are rarely serious in conducting the leather picture shows.

For performance of a leather picture show the paraphernalia required are : 1) two country cots ; 2) three blankets ; 3) one thin quality headgear ; 4) three to four bamboo poles ; 5) Oil lamp, or petromax, or electric lamp ; 6) A few thorns of *ali* (thorny babul tree), besides the musical instruments. All these materials are procured from the rural folk by the Killekyatha artists who bring with them only the leather pictures.

The stage is arranged either on any raised platform, or by placing wooden planks on 2-3 empty drum,s if they are available and thus making a platform. The cots (*horasu*) are placed horizontally on two sides at a distances of nearly eight feet. The front side is left for the screen. A portion equivalent to one fourth of the white thin neadgear is covered with a blanket and the other three fourth is draped so as to act as the screen. The screen is fixed with thorns in order to avoid folds. The other three sides are fully covered with the blankets. The bamboo poles are tied to to the cots vertically so as to hold the petromax, or oil lamp. When bright light falls on coloured leather pictures they reflect and shine on the white translucent screen. The artist sits at the place covered by the blankets and specially provided for him. Other artists like harmonium and *tabla* players and singers sit outside screen. the sketch of the stage is given on facing page 40.

The plays from the epics often enacted are as described below :

1. *Mahabharat* : 1. *Pagadi* (dice) play of the Pandavas and Kauravas. 2. *Aranya Parva* (wanderings in forests). 3. *Virata Parva* (one year of disguise) and 4. Kukukshetra (Battle between Pandavas and Kaurava)

2. *Ramayana* : Entire Ramayana comprising Dasarath's plight, *Vanavasa* (wanderings in the forests) of Rama and Seeta and Lakshmana, till Rama Pattabhisheka (ascending of throne by Rama).

Most of the leather pictures of the Killekyatha represent divine characters. The Killekyatha artists, however, keep in their possession a few pictures of human characters also which are required for their narration of local anecdotes and comics for entrertaining audience. When one elder Hanumappa was asked to give the list of the leather pictures in his possession, he willingly gave the following list :

characters represented in the leather pictures Epics

1. *Mahabharat* : Dharmaraja, Bheema, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadeva, Sakuni, Kouraveswary, (Duryodhan), Bhisma, Dusyasana, Drona, Salya, Krishna, Balarama, Ganapati, Kunti, Draupadi.

2. *Ramayana :* Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, Shatrughna, Dasaratha, Vasishtha, Seeta, Surpanakhi, Kaka, Ravana, Vali, Maruti, Vibhisana, Maricha Sugriva, Kharasur, Vrishamukha, Dundubhi, Lankini, Kumbhakarna, Indragit, Atikaya, Mahiravana, Ahiravana, Sukracharya, Dadibala, Baladevi, Aswamedha, Lavakusa.

3. *Animals and Birds etc.* Deer, Eagle, Fish, Mountain, Ashokavana.

   Others : Two to three men and similarly two to three women characters are designed in leather pictures with a peculiar comical characters. Men characters are named as : 1) *Gutya* Basappa (tufty Basappa), 2) Kalappa or Mallappa, 3) *Sodya* (cheat) of city/village or *Magiya* and *gobya* (*drunkards*), and women characters having names commonly found lkke Bhadravva, Paravva, Irakka etc.

From the above list, it may be observed that most of the heroic characters of the epics are represented. In the absence of a leather picture of a particular character, the Killekyatha artist has the skill to use other leather pictures for that character at the time of the shows. Thus, a leather picture character of Dharmaraja of Mahabharat may be used for Dasaratha of Ramayana. Due to this operational convenience, the Killekyatha artists of Kalikapur do not carry many leather pictures with them on their on their errands.

For the purpose of leather picture shows certain amount of moving in villages is required. Ramappa of Kalikapur has established a good name for himself as an artist. He along with his eldest son moves in mostly

the southern talukas of Belgaum and Bijapur districts and northern talukas of Dharwar district. The movement in case of other artists is precisely the same area.

The Killekyatha artists were found to possess leather pictures since several generations. At present no one is found to be making leather pictures. The exquisite colouring on the leather pictures and that of the cuttings and carvings made in leather was a specialised technique which has not flourished. When Ramappa was asked as to from where the leather pictures were obtained, he readily answered that they bought them from Mysore. When he was repeatedly asked to give the source of selling the leather pictures, he finally said that he deliberately told lies for fear of partiing with some of the leather pictures, for many people ask him so during his movements. He was afraid that I would have also asked some leather pictures if he had told the truth. He said that the leather pictures he possessd were all got from their ancestors. In case the leather pictures get torn, they are to be replaced by better ones. The dearth of leather pictures make them to restrict some of their epical narration. Large number of leather pictures were available previously with the Killekyatha artists. But the leather pictures were 'left in the water' whenever an artist stops functioning, or often one's descendents taking to other calling after the death of an artist, The idea of 'leaving the leather pictures in water' which became unfit for their shows is to destroy them. Since most of the leather pictures represented divine characters, the proper place for them is to 'sink them in water' so that none got them. While sinking the leather pictures, worship is made by breaking a cocoanut and offering puffed rice. One elder expressed the fear that if they gave them to other people, the latter may prepare duplicates and may learn their shows which might hit them in their profession. The usual explanation given for their destruction is that ill luck would befall the families which do not adhere to the tradition of sinking the torn leather pictures. One of the elders exclaimed that if the Malaprabha river (which is very close to Kalikapur) dries up they may find innumerable boxes (made of thick bamboo straps) containing leather pictures sunk by the Killekyatha. Perhaps, his statement is much exaggerated. Ramappa's statement, however, indicates that there are not many families having the leather pictures. He stated that about three years ago he wanted to have another set of leather pictures as his eldest son had taken one set he had possessed. He went to several kin of his to find out a set, Finally, he was able to find a box containing leather pictures stored in the attic of his elder sister's house at Dastikoppa village in Belgaum district. At first, his nephews were reluctant to part with them although they had taken to sedentary life since long. He perusaded his nephews by approaching them several times and the latter finally agreed to his repeated request. He and his son sorted all

the leather pictures in their possession, and picked up those which were torn out and not usable. They were packed in a box, which wasce remonially sank the Malaprabha river by tying a stone so that the leather pictures did not float.

The leather picture showers move in villages and camp there with their families.The villagers make contracts with them for a particular show. Though the charges for a show are usually Rupees fifteen, in times of necessity, the Killekyatha may agree to conduct their shows for a lesser charge. During festivals they have greater demand and their earnings during that time are more. Charges for a show conducted then would be between Rupees twenty to twenty five. During the Holi festival, one show was contracted for Rupees twenty two in my presence. There is a belief in the dry belts of Bijapur, Belgaum and Dharwar districts that there will be plenty of rains[2] if the Killekyatha conducted the Pandawas shows, and hence during drought conditions people would like to arrange their shows in the villages.

The leather picture shows start at 9.00 p.m. and end at 2.00 a.m. The epical sequences are narrated with touch of moral ideas contained in them. Though the rural folk know the epical stories and their contents the Killekyatha's way of narrating the epics through the leather pictures interests them. The Killekyatha in a true sense are the cultural specialists who infuse cultural contents of great and little traditions through the cultural media of narration, singing and leather picture shows.

OCCUPATIONS OF WOMEN

As stated earlier the important traditional occupations of women are : 1. Stitcing quilts and, 2. Tattooing. A brief description of these would highlight the economic activities of women.

STITCHING QUILT (*Koui heleyuvadu*)

Women members of the nomadic families follow the occupation stitching quilts which helps them to supplement their incomes when they are on the their movement along with their menfolk. In the villages where Killekyatha move there is great demand for the quilts which are known as *Koudi*. Torn pieces of various kinds of garments are collected from the parties wanting to have the quilts stitched. The *koudis* replace woollen blankets so to say during winter season. The *koudi* is not only used for covering but also for spreading. Since the raw material that is torn out rags are provided by the clients, the latter have to pay only the labour charges for stitching them into quilts. The Killekyatha women do this job on contract basis. The time taken for stitching each quilt varies. There are three phases in preparing a quilt. In the first phase, the rags are wet in

water and then pieced together in layers by a thicker stitching. Later they are put up for drying. The second phase covers the stitching of the different layers. Usually a quilt has three layers. In the third phase, finishing in done with fine stitching. Since three phases are involved in making a quilt the Killekyatha usually take up the work of stitching of two or three quilts at a time. It is estimated that on an average a women stitches three quilts in a week. Each quilt measuring 3′ X 8′ costs Rupees six. The Killekyatha women have to bear the cost of the thread used for stitching. Usually the cost of the thread is about thirty to thirty five paise per quilt. As the Killekyatha vistit the same villages every year they have a relationship of familiarly with their clients. As it is mainly a women's job they are mostly approached by women for making quilts and it appears that women irrespective of their cast and classaffiliation have more to 'gossip' among themselves and enlarge the area of their knowledge about each other.

The work of stitching the quilts is done by women only among the Killekyatha in the northern parts of Mysore State. It is gathered that besides the Killekyatha, people of another nomadic community, i.e., Gondhali, also do the work of *koudi* stitching. Among them, both men and women do the work as a principal occupation. The *koudi* has acquired an important utilitarian value among the lives of the villagers of the area. It is said that person is born in *koudi* and dies in it. The child is kept in a *koudi* after its birth. When a person dies, the dead body is carried in a *koudi* which practice was in vogue among many castes. In some of the higher castes like the Lingayat, there has been changed in carrying the dead. A bamboo bier is built for the purpose. But, about twenty years ago or so, the *koudi* was used by many castes including the Lingayat in Kalikapur village to carry the dead. Even now the Killekyatha carry the dead in *koudi* (More details on the funeral practices of the Killekyatha are given in chapter six).

TATTOOING (*Wachche chuchohuvad*)

Women of the Killekyatha and Kunchi Korava—another nomadic group—are the only people who are found to serve the settled people so far as tattooing is concerned. An elderly Killekyatha women of Kalikapur said that the art of tattooing became popular during the reign of Muslims in Karnatak and Maharashtra especially when Sivaji Maharaja established his principality and was fighting the Muslim chieftains. As a revenge the Maratha women were abducted by the Muslims. Since they too were Marathas, as they claim, there was the danger of their women being abudcted. Usually, the Muslims were not adbucting women with marks made in dark colours. Women with tattoo marks were left scot-free. Therefore, their women learnt the art for saving themselves from

the wrath of the Muslim's attrocities. Women of other castes also prefered to have tattooing extensively. Thus, for the Killekyatha women it came very handy during their movement for taking up the work of tattooing. Whatever be the reason for taking up to tattooing till recently many a Killekyatha women earned Rupees four to five in a village per day when they got the job of tattooing. But since past ten to fifteen years, it is said that women of the younger generation are not taking up the job. The Table 2 shows that among the nomadic families only three women have stated to follow it, and that too, as a subsidiary occupation. The reasons adduceed by two ealderly women who still do the job were : 1. Tattooing is a specialised job wherein pricking by needle is to be done without causing pain and this needs training from childhood ; 2. women of other communities consider the iob as of inferior status, and are looked down upon those who follow the job as the Kunchi Korava women too, follow the job and status of the latter is considered very low even by the Killekyatha ; 3. Previously, large number of tattoos were a prestigeous sign of women of higher castes. But not women do not bother for too many tattoo marks. They are contented with a symbolic sign on the forehead, hand etc ; 4. The earnings have dwindled on account of the attitude of the settled people going in for fewer signs of tattoo. These reasons are responsible for decline in the number of the Killekyatha tattooers. Among the 39 women shown in Table 2, there were several women who had done this job earlier.

The articles required for tattooing are : the ink, a bunch of thin sharp needles and turmeric. The ink is prepared by collecting the suit by keeping an oil lamp. The client has to give a cocoanut, camphor or sandal sticks. The tattooer after worshipping their deities begin the operation. First, she draws the design by the ink and then starts tattooing by the sharp needles. After its completion turmeric is sprinkled on the tattooes which heals the wound made by the needles. The charges for tattooing depend upon the number and size of the tattooes. Usually, the charge; vary between Rupees two to five. Women generally know a few designs popular in the area like the scorpion, chariot, Hanumantha (deity), creepers of grapes, peococks etc. A women was found to keep a not book containing some popular designs. Some of the important designs made in her notebook are shown separately.

The Killekyatha women provide this service to all the castes including those of the scheduled castes. Though there are no specific marks for any particular caste, the Kshatriya women prefer to have long strap tattoings on their forehead while others have round marks on their forehead in between the eyebrows for applying vermilion. It was said that in earlier generation women knew the art and were helping hands for their spouse during their movements. But not the situation has changed as already described and fewer women are taking up the job. Those who have settled at Kalikapur hase practically stopped it since long.

OTHER OCCUPATIONS

Besides the traditional occupations described above the other occupations followed by the Killekyatha are : 1. Repairing metal pots ; and 2. Agricultural labour. The Table 2 shows that 15 persons out of 43 are following the occupation of repairing metal pots. A brief description in the following section would show the circumstances under which the Killekyatha have taken up these jobs.

REPAIRING METAL POTS (*Koda maduvadu*)

The occupation of repairing metal pots is a recent one for the Killekyatha of Kalikapur. It is a kind of blacksmithy work which they have learnt it from others. The work includes only the small scale repairs of the metal pots, vessels etc., and beyond that no heavy smithy work like preparing iron implements etc., is undertaken. They can do the job of tinning (*kalai*) the vessels but usually they do not undertake such work for the reason that they believe that usage of ammonium chloride in such work affects lungs badly. This occupations was not known to the Killekyatha about fifteen years ago. How the work of repairing metal pots was learnt is illustrated by narrating the following two cases :

One Hanumappa of Kalikapur then an young boy of sixteen was camping at Chikkanayagund village along with his father. His father was doing the job of fastening selvages of balnkets which the son had also learnt. One day, out of curiosity he went to see the workshop (*shale*) of a Katabu (their own community) from Chichakandi village in Mudhol taluka, Bijapur district who was doing the work of repairing metalled pots. Seeing the Killekyatha boy intently observing his smith-work he remarked that the boy should not waste time in seeing his work which he cannot learn, and advised him to attend to the work of fastening selvage of blankets instead, which would atleast fetch him some coins for livelihood. The boy, felt insulted and left the place, but was waiting for an opportunity to teach the fellow a lesson. After a few days one Baba Saheb of Athni in Belgaum district (of Maratha caste) who was also doing the work of repairing metalled pots wanted to camp near the place. Where the Katabu man was still camping. When the Katabu man objected Baba Saheb's stay, Hanumappa and his father supported the latter's stay and ultimately forced the former to leave the place. Baba Saheb was later told by Hanumappa about the insulting remarkes of the Katabu man, and sought the latter's help in learing the profession only to show the Katabu man that he too was capable of doing such work. Baba Saheb then persuaded Hanumappa's father to depute the boy for a period of an year or so so that he could teach him the smith-work. The father agreed and deputed the boy who learnt the work even before the stipulated period. When he

had started the work independently, he not only taught his brothers and cousions, but other youngsters of Kalikapur. Hanumappa even now remembers the Katabu man on account of whom he was able to take the challenge of learning the smithwork.

The other case is that of one Fakirappa. He used to meet often one Ramappa of Hallur village in Belgaum district during his movement. The latter had earnt the work of repairing metal pots from some Marathas of Kolhapur area (Maharashtra). Fakirappa did the job of fastening selvages of blankets and also conducted leather picture shows. Ramappa wanted to learn the art of lather picture shows as some of his community men in his village had a stock of leather pictures but none was well-versed in it. Fakirappa taught him the art and in return he learnt the smithwork from Ramappa. Fakirappa stated that this had happened some ten years ago. Later he taught his son the work of repairing metal pots. Both the persons now follow the new occupation. Fakirappa's son has taught two of his kin subsequently. The acquaintance of Fakirappa and Ramappa turned into affinal kin as former's son married the daughter of the later in 1970.

The tools used for the work of *repairing metal pots* are : 1. A fan (*pankha*) ; 2. A crowbar (*hare*) ; 3. Two hammers (*suttige*) ; 4. A pair of tongs (*ikkala*) ; and 5. A heavy ball (*gundu*). These tools are bought from the shops at Hubli, Dharwar, Bagalkot, Badamik Nargund and Ramdurg towns. The cost of the whole set was nearly Rs. 32 /- at Hubli market in 1971. The details of the price for the set were as stated by one yamanappa :

Item	*Amount* Rs.
1. Fam	22.00
2. Crowbar	2.50
3. Hammer Rs. 1.50 each for 2	3.00
4. A pair of tongs	1.50
5. A heavy ball	3.00
	Rs. 32.00

In the case of performing the work of repairing metal pots two persons are required. One person has to go on turning the hand operated fan for keeping the fire smouldering in the forge prepared in the ground. Any person even a boy or girl of 10-12 years of age can do this job. The other person will actually attend to the main work of repairing metal pots. For the operation of turning the fan, usually younger boys are drafted who later gradually learn the technique of repairing metal pots. Basappa and his elder brother yallappa are two recent cases who had learnt the work of repariring metal pots first by attednding to the work of turning the fan, and then later learning the actual work under the guidance of their father's brother Hanumappa. The Killekyatha smiths when they visit a village collect the articles like the metal pots and other vessels for repair work, and establish at one place their workshop (*shale*) usually near the place of their camp. Since they visit the village after lapse of several months, they usually get some work. The workshop is set up at 9.00 in the morning till 1.00 p.m. when they extinguish the forge. For a continuous four hours work it is estimated that they get remuneration somewhere between Rupees ten to fifteen. In the evening they do not usually do the job unless there is work of urgent nature, or they themselves desire to complete the work. In case the smith workers were able to collect Rupees hundred or so, they usually return to Kalikapur village for a short while and spend the money as they like and again resume their work when they spend the entire money. In such cases, they keep their workshop tools at the village where they break their journeys.

It is said that there are people of other communities like the Marathas from Kolhapur (Maharashtra) area and Muslims smith workers who also move in search of work of repairing metal pots in the same area where the Killekyatha move. The sedentary people in the villages prefer to assign such type of work to those Killekyatha who regularly visit their village and are known to them as they have to part with their valuable metal articles like pots, vessels etc. Due to their frequent visits the Killekyatha smiths establish good clientele in the villages. The remuneration for the smithwork is as high as ten to fifteen rupees a day when there is ample work as already said. Many youngesters are taking to the smithwork. Even an young man of 22 years from among the settled families of Kalikapur who has earned a good name as an agricultural labourer wants to learn the smithwork. If the present trend is any indication, it appears that in future the traditional occupations like fastening selvages to blankets and leather picture shows would be replaced by the newly learnt occupation of repairing metal pots. Interestingly enough, the latter profession also required extensive moving in order to procure work like the former ones.

AGRICULTURAL WORK, (*Cooli kelsa*)

During their movement when the Killekyatha elders do not get any work they do the job of casual agricultural work in the fields as day labourers. Such work is usually available during harvesting seasons. The sedentary people need labourers and the Killekyatha are employed for this purpose. Only during emergencies the Killekyatha undertake such jobs. The Table 2 shows that seven persons were found to have under taken such jobs as chief occupation when their household census was taken.

'NOMADIC OCCUPATIONS' AND THEIR ECONOMIC SYMBOSIS

The occupations like the fastening selvage of blankets, leather picture shows, smithwork and stitching quilts require moving from one village to another in order to procure work. I am using the term 'nomadic occupations' for these specilized occupations, though in a very loose sense as against the term 'sedentary occupations'.

I am using the term because for a job like fastening the selvage, for instance a person collects the blankets from the sedentary people in a particular place, and as soon the work is over he leaves the place for another place in order to get fresh work. Those who conduct leather picture shows camp in a particular place and approach the sedentary people for patromage and when such patronage is over from the specific area they move to another place. In the case of the repairing metal pots—the type of smithwork the Killekyatha practise, the smiths usually undertake repair work and do not themselves make the pots or vessels afresh as said earlier. The latter job, viz. making pots or vessels etc., is done in factories in bigger towns. The villagers get the work done by these Killekyatha smiths whenever small repairs to the pots and vessels, especially for filling the water, and cooking are needed. Since the work mainly relates to repairing the pots, the work is called as *koda maduvadu.* A family of smith workers usually gets contract work in a village so as to last for a fortnight or so, and naturally, the family has to move to the other village in search of work. Women's work of stitching quilts goes on side by side when the male members do the main jobs and as and when they move to other camps, women also get the work. In Table 3 it is indicated that women of settled families of Kalikapur have been doing the work of stitching quilts, but as I have already stated, the women move to the nearby villages in search of work, and attend to the limited quantity of work by staying at Kalikapur permanently. When there is no work, they remain in the village attending to the domestic work. We may, therefore, not that so far as these specialized occupations of the Killekyatha are concerned, movement becomes a pre-requisite. Their stay in a particular village camp is determined by

the availability of work which depends upon the size of the village, and the frequencies of the visits of the Killekyatha of not only of Kalikapur village, but also of other villages. By and large, the Killekyatha have developed contacts with the sedentary people in the villages where they repeat their visits every year, and their constant contact over the years ensures that they are welcome to the villages and that they are given adequate work.

According to the Killekyatha their occupations are 'nomadic' in nature. They do not know in future what would happen to these occupations whether these occupations could be taken up by taking to sedentary life. But as the situation now exists many families have to move in order to procure work, and by moving from place to place, subsidtence is guaranteed. Due to this economic incentive people move. Therefore the 'nomadic' aspects, of their 'occupations are highlighted here.

The services provided to the sedentary people in the villages by the Killekyatha are considered useful in the case of at least their economic pursuits, namely, fastening selvages of blankets, repariring metal pots, and stitching quilts. In the case of the lather picture shows, the service has to be provided to groups of people in a village, and not to individual persons as in the case of other activities. It is stated that if a Killekyatha party is camping, villagers arrange for their shows. In the case of fastening selvage of blankets the sedentary peole have no other agency wherein they can get the work done except the Killekyatha. The latter provide the service at the door steps of their clients and the emuneration is 'fairly moderate', if the word can be used, as the charges for each material varies from seventy five paise to one rupee. Such fastening to selvage of blankets is usually done only once. In order to selvage costly materials like the woollen blankets etc., fastening of the selvage of these materials becomes necessary.

The metal articles like the pots, vessels, etc. wear out an start leaking when they are constantly used. In the villages, metal pots are used for carrying water from the wells and ponds. The pots are swung in the wells by means of strong ropes for filling water. While swinging and drawing water from the wells, the metal pots ar hit by the stone corners of wells and start leaking. The metal pots, usually, made of copper which are used by most villagers are costly, that is, their prices range from Rs. 80 to 120 depending upon the size of each pot. The Killekyatha smith workers go to the clients for reapairing a leak or for removing a dent for a Rupee or so, If a villager has to take such articles to a workshop at a town places, he has to pay not only charges for the work but also bear the cost of travelling, besides carrying the weight of metal articles. In the event of the work not being complete in such places, he is required to stay also. But the Killekyatha smithworkers go to the villages at intervals of a few

months and attend to such works. It is said that unless it is an emergency the villager waits for them to undertake their work.

The villagers like to possess the quilts prepared out of the cloth pieces. The blankets woven by the shephared caste people cost nearly Rupees fifteen to twenty, and they are used only during winter. Only well-to-do families afford to buy one or two such blankets. The *chadars* are usually bought by the rich and the enducated people in the villages and they are used only for covering during winter, and they are not used as bedspread. As already described the *kondi* i.e the quilt is a multi purpose cloth material which is prepared by the Killekyatha woman at a price of Rupees six or seven for a bigger size auilt. It is said that such quilts last for several years. From the point of the villager, especially to the peasantry in the village, the Killekyatha's services are essential and hence Killekyatha are welcome. The torn pieces of garments are preserved and the services of the Killekyatha women utilised. Since mostly the Killekyatha and Gondhali people do the job, the villager has to dpend on them.

The leather piture show is a specialized art which only a few Killekyatha artists have been able to retain it. In the villages where they move there is patronage for the Killekyatha and demand for display of their shows. Since the people of an entire village contributes financially and arranges the leather picture shows, particularly on such occasions like the fairs, festivals, or market days, the villagers enjo not only the fun, but the cultural contents of the epical narration as the Killekyatha artists dwel upon the stories of the two great epics—The Mahabharat and the Ramayana. The belief that if the Killekyatha narrate the story of the Pandavas (of Mahabharata) there would be rains, makes the villagers of such a village where there are no rains, quickly to arrange their shows. Though this belief had a strong base, now-a-days many a villager do not seem to give credence to the belief. Nevertheless, there are people who would like to arrange for their shows when there are drought conditions. Apart from this the leather picture shows are conducted by the Killekyatha at the level of the villagers infusing fun and local comics and telling the stories of divine beings with music and singing. These shows are still popular in the country side as folk art. Therefore, whenever a Killekyatha artist moves to a new camp, he gets contracts from the neighbouring villagers. The famed artists like Ramappa and his son of Kalikapur claim to have good clientele. It may be emphasized here that both these persons who solely depend upon conducting the leather picture shows are found to be moving in the countryside during the major part of the year. At the most they would be visiting Kalikapur causally and after laspse of several weeks.

OCCUPATIONAL CHANGES

In order to ascertain the occupational changes a schedule was canvassed to those families who are found to be moving in the villages. Out of the 27 families data from the heads of 20 families was available. The data on the traditional and present occupations followed by the informants is taublated as given in Table 4.

The traditional occupation of fastening selvage of blankets followed by 15 families out of the 20, has given way to the 'nomadic occupations of repairing metalled pots to nearly 50% (7 families) taking it as present occupation—as may be seen from the Table 4. In case of other occupations, there are no significant changes.

It may be seen from the above Table That 4 persons out of 7 from the age group of 21-30 years have taken up the new occupation of smith work. Among the twenty persons, six persons (30 %) and one person (5%) have taken up the occupation as primary and subsidiary occupation respectively. It may, therefore, be observed that the new occupation of smith work has attracted the Killekyatha to adopt it as one of their primary economic activities, particularly be the youngesters.

The Killekyatha resort to moving in certain specific area where they come in closer contact with the local sedentary people. The 'nomadic occupations' followed by them have helped them to earn their livelihood. Thus, the economic symbiosis with the sedentary pople helps the nomadic people to continue nomadic life. Significantly the 'nomadic occupations' continue to keep the nomadic traditions going on, as in the very nature of these specialized economic activities movement from one place to another in search of work becomes a necessity. There is demand for the services of the Killekyatha in the rural areas and so long as there is demand Killekyatha would continue to provide the services. When the Killekyatha of Kalipapur felt that the demands, for such services like the festening selvage of blankets and the leather picture shows were limited in rural areas as villagers were buying factory made materials requiring no fastening of selvage and as Cinemas had become increasingly popular with touring tent talkies and many a villagers dubbing the leather picture shows of the Killekyatha as crude form of art, the Killekyatha went in search of other economic persuits suited to their nomadic way of life, so far as nomadic families are concerned. Taking up the profession of agriculture and agricultural labour in a village means to sedentarize which was not easily possible for the nomadic families. The occupation of the kind of smithery was acceptable to the Killekyatha as it involved movement. Among the Killekyatha smithwork was taken up by youngsters recently. It was observed that more and more persons are showing interest in taking up the new occupation.

Table 4 : *Classification of occupations according to the categories of traditional and present*

	Sl. No.	Name of occupations		Number of informants	
		Primary	Subsidiary	Traditional	Present
A.	1	Fastening selvage of blankets	—	5	1
	2	—Do—	Agricultural labour	4	2
	3	—Do—	Leather picture show	3	2
	4	—Do—	Leather picture show and also repairing metal pots Fishing	—	1
	5	—Do—		3	3
			Total	15	9
B.	1	Repairing metal pots	—	—	6
	2	—Do—	Leather picture show	—	1
			Total	—	7
C.		Leather picture Show	—	3	2
			Total	3	2
D.		Agricultural labour	—	1	2
			Total	1	2
E.		Agriculture		1	—
			Total	1	—
			Grand Total	20	20

The age factor in relation to the present occupations followed by the 20 families was also considered, and the same is analysed in the following Table.

Table 5 : *Agewise distribution of occupation presently followed by the nomadic families*

Sl. No.		Name of occupations		Age groups					Total
		Primary	Subsidiary	21—30	31—40	41—50	51—60	61—70	
A.	1	Fastening Selvage of blankets	— —	—	—	—	1	—	1
	2	—Do — labour	Agricultural	—	1	—	—	1	2
	3	—Do—	Leather picture show	—	1	—	1	—	2
	4	—Do—	Leather picture show and also repairing metal pots	—	1	—	—	—	1
	5	—Do —	Fishing	3	—	—	—	—	3
			Total	3	3	—	2	1	9
B.	1	Repairing metal pots	—	—	4	1	—	1	6
	2	—Do—	Leather Picture Show	—	—	1	—	—	1
			Total	4	1	1	1	—	7
C.		Leather picture show	—	—	—	1	1	—	2
			Total	—	—	1	1	—	2
D.		Agricultural labour	—	—	1	—	—	1	2
			Total	—	1	—	—	1	2
Grand Total				7	5	2	4	2	20

LAND TENURE AND LAND HOLDINGS

The Kalikapur village has been considered as a permanent base camp since about forty years or so as the older Killekyatha say. The '*Killekyathar Vathar*' has come into being almost at the same time. As said earlier, the Kshatriya leaders of Kalikapur had helped some Killekyatha families to acquire a few acres of lands. Before describing the land holdings of the Killekyatha it is useful to discuss the prevailing land tenure system in the area.

There are four important systems of land tenure and share cropping which are traditionally known to the peasants of the area. They are :

1. *Koru palu :* In this system, the entire yield is shared equally between the tenant and the land owner. The cultivation is done solely by the tenant, but the land owner has to pay the actual costs incurred during the cultivation like labour, purchase of seeds etc.
2. *Agav tavani :* A tenant is required to pay an agreed sum to the land owner in advance, in lieu of the entire yield.
3. *Kattigalu :* Land is given to a tenant with the condition that the latter gave a fixed quantity of grains, usually, millet (*jola*) to the owner. The land owner has no right to the yield for the period in question.
4. *Swatah :* It means self cultivation. The land owner himself cultivates, or supervises agricultural operations by employing labourers. The latter are paid in kind or cash as per oral agreement and the entire yield goes to the land owner.

The Killekyatha of Kalikapur while giving information of lands possessed by them and also on the land tenure were not frank. On these questions, they gave answers in general terms by stating that some two or three acres of lands are held by them, or as some of them cultivate lands, or as they are nomads how they can own lands etc. But details of lands owned by each individual families were taken and later varified orally by the close acquaintances. The data on possession of land and the system of land tenure for both the nomadic and settled familes is given in Table 6.

From the Table 6 it may be observed that the land owned by the nomadic families are meagre ; On an average it may work out as nearly 1.5 acre per family in the case of those families who are shown as 'self' cultivators, and also 'those of their kin' who are shown as actual cultivators are stated to be following the tenure called as *swatch* as described above. But they too supervise their lands by employing agricultural

Table 6 : *Land held by the Killekyatha of Kalikapur and types of land tenure.*

Sl. No.	Person supervising of cultivating lands and relationship to the head.	Nomadic families				Settled Families			
		Number of families	Percentage	Extent of lands possessed (in acres)	Percentage	Number of families	Percentage	Extent of land possessed (in acres)	Percentage
1	Self (Head of the family)	5	18.5	16.0	40.5	7	36.9	23.5	58.0
2	Elder Brother	1	3.7	1.5	3.8	—	—	—	—
3	Younger Brother	1	3.7	4.0	10.1	—	—	—	—
4	Wife	1	3.7	2.5	6.3	1	5.2	2.0	5.0
5	Father	3	11.1	7.0	17.9	—	—	—	—
6	Mother	2	7.4	4.0	10.1	—	—	—	—
7	Peasants of other villages	4	14.8	4.5	11.3	4	21.0	15.0	37.0
8	Not possessing any lands	10	37.1	—	—	7	36.9	—	—
	Total	27	100.0	39.5	100.0	19	100.0	40.5	100.0

labour. The other three kinds of tnure, namely *koru palu*, *agav lavani* and *kattigalu* is also followed by the nomadic Killekyatha families. The latter usually do not bother for personal cultivation of their land as they can accept the above stated land tenures by which they can get the desired benefit from their land. The system was more beneficial to land owners before the Bombay Tenancy Act in the erstwhile Bombay State was brought into force since 1948. But due to various land reform measures the Killekyatha are facing certain difficulties such as tenants' unwillingness to keep their promise to pay the rents etc. In many cases, therefore, among the settled families they are taking to *swatah* cultivation. In the case of the nomadic families the small quantity of land held by them does not make much dent on their taking to nomadic life. Therefore, they usually give their land to their kin or any peasant who are willing to accept their terms and tenure, despite the legal hurdles.

Holding a few acres of land raise an important problem of cultivation. For cultivation by oneself a few acres of lands are required. But one can arrange for cultivation through the various land tenures described above. In some cases nomadic families'supervise cultivation' during their stay at the base camp, viz., Kalikapur village after returning from movements. In times of necessity the Killekyatha may sell their land. It was stated that between 1940-71, certain transactions of sale of lands have taken place. During marriage, or in financial crisis, they may pledge their lands to either to their own kin or richmen of the village for a paultry sum and ultimately loose their lands. Cases of Mayappa an Hanumappa ane illustrative. Mayappa sold two acres of land to his son-in-law. Hanumappa who used to incur debt for playing cards sold his four acres of land to his sister's husband. The late Subanappa had sold his nineteen acres of forest land but later had bought two acres of fertile land. The settled families in many cases were found to be dependent upon agriculture and agricultural labour. Many expressed that they have attachment for land and prefer to cultivate. To cite examples, there are persons like Marutappa, Sivamurthappa, Hanumappa, Basappa, Appanna among others who were found to attend to agricultural work with great interest for that was their main source of livelihood. In the case of nomadic families the emphasis is for taking to 'nomadic occupations', and those who own lands prefer to take to any one of the prevailaing land tenure systems described above.

NOTES

1. There is a popular proverb in Kannada to say that if shepherds weave blankets and Killekyatha perform their leather picture shows there would be rains.

CHAPTER IV

AREA OF MOVEMENT

There are a large number of nomadic people who have fixed round of 'cyclical' or 'rhythmic' movement, to use Krader's (1959 : 499) words. These groups mainly are the nomadic pastoralists whose movements are organised in search of fodder. We find a number of non-pastoral nomadic groups in India who also move. Their movements are organised in search of work. The distinguishing features of the nomadic pastoralists and those of the non-pastoralist nomadic groups of India as has been best shown by Bose thus : "...along with the castes who practise settled forms of life in rural India, there are quite a few who form their complement and who have a more or less nomadic form of existence. This nomadism is unlike the nomadism of pastoral people in so far as the dependence is not so much on animals as in the latter case, and the movements are guided by the needs of trade rather by the needs of food of the animals reared" (1956 : 5). As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the Killekyatha movements are mainly guided by the consideration of getting work for their livelihood. In this chapter my attempt will be to precisely demarcate the area of movement of the Killekyatha of Kalikapur, and to discuss other related aspects concerning their movements.

In order to find out the area where the Killekyatha move the data was collected from the heads of families by means of a schedule and out of 27 nomadic families, 20 persons responded to the schedule. The main questions relevant to the study, namely, area of movement, period of movement, mode of movement, ancestral place etc., dealt in the schedule are discussed here. Since the Killekyatha move in individual families, the method of interview was adopted to get detailed assessment in each case. The following discussion based on the 20 schedules would give a general idea about their movement.

AREA

The Killekyatha move from one village to the other, usually starting from Kalikapur which they consider as their permanent base camp since long and return to their base camp periodically. When the data of the past three years i.e., from 1969-71 was taken in each case, they gave the names of a few prominent villages, and gave the 'sides' (*kade*) where they usually moved such as, Bailhongalside, Saundattiside, Nargundside, Bagalkotside, etc., associating with the names of bigger towns. In order to get a proper picture of the areas where each family moved, names of

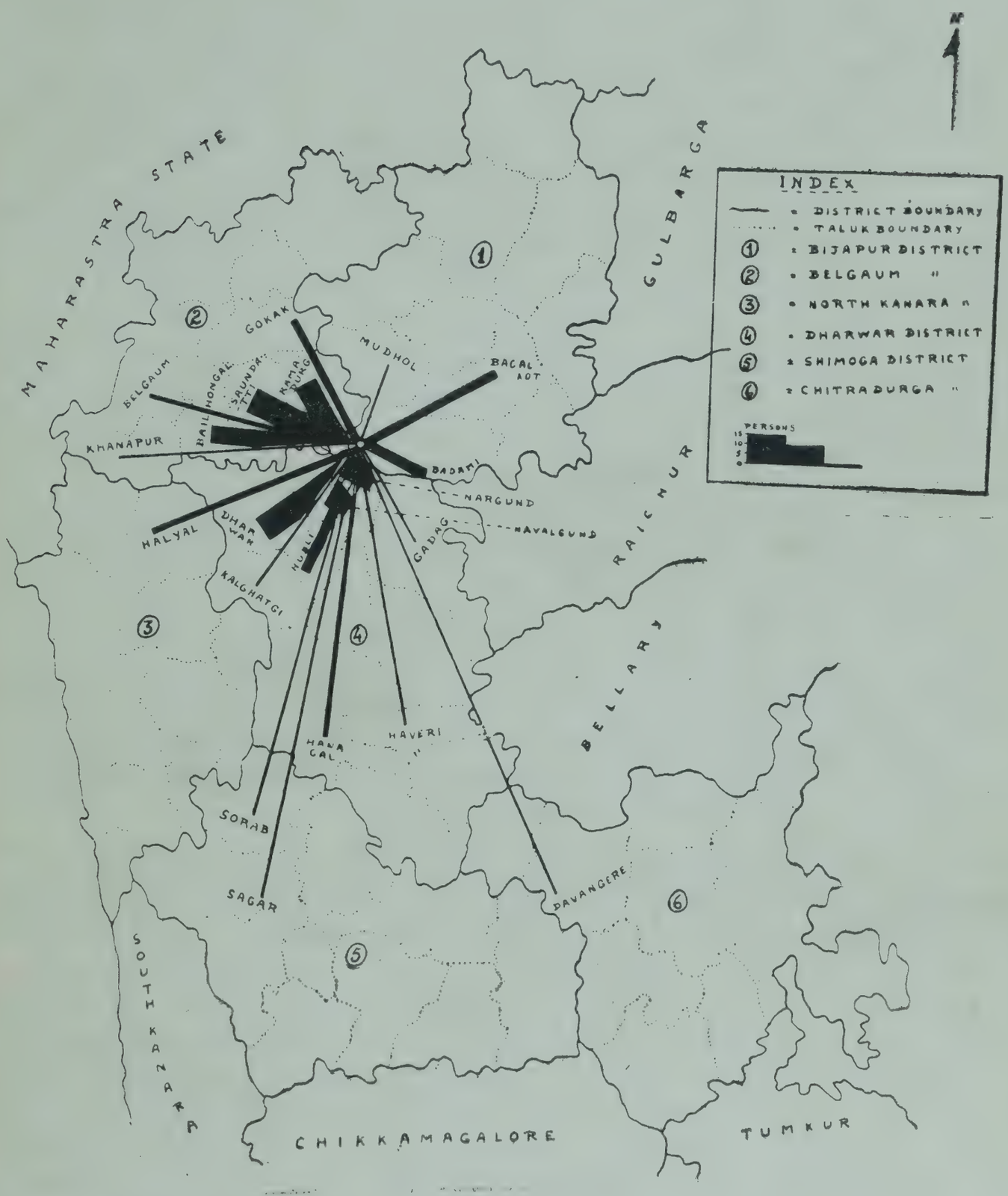
the prominent villages and the talukas where they are situated were ascertained. It was considered useful to show the area of their movement in a Table according the taluka, and also to plot the area in a map. the Table 7 shows the number of nomadic families moving in different talukas of different districts.

Table 7 : *Area where the nomadic Killekyatha families move.*

	Name of the district	Name of the taluka	Number of individual families visiting the taluka
1	Dharwar	Nargund	15
		Dharwar	13
		Navalgund	12
		Hubli	5
		Hangal	2
		Haveri	1
		Kalghatgi	1
		Gadag	1
2	Belgaum	Saundatti	13
		Ramdurg	12
		Bailhongal	9
		Gokak	4
		Belgaum	2
		Khanapur	1
3	Bijapur	Badami	5
		Bagalkot	4
		Mudhol	1
4	North Kanara	Halyal	3
5	Chitradurg	Davangere	1
6	Shimoga	Sorab	1
		Sagar	1

It may be observed from the Table 7 that broadly the Killekyatha move in the contiguous areas of Dharwar, Belgaum and Bijapur districts. For the nomadic Killekyatha of Kalikapur area extends up to Hubli taluka in Dharwar district, Gokak Taluka in Belgaum district, and Bagalkot taluka in Bijapur district if the minimum number of families moving in a particular taluka is taken as four. There are cases of a few families moving in other talukas also, but they may be taken as individual cases of occurrences where the concerned families have established contacts and have been found to be moving.

Area of movement of the Killekyatha



The Killekyatha families move in a particular taluka and visit those villages where they would be finding work as well as convenience for stay like the availability of a good shrine. Bigger villages are found to be convenient both for stay and getting work and from such bigger villages they move to smaller villages in the neighbourhood during the day time and return to their temporary camps. Since a nomadic family would be visiting the very same villages in the subsequent years, in most cases, members of a family come to know many people in a village, some times by their

personal names ; similarly, the villagers too know the Killekyatha by their names. In one of my visits to Dharwar town I was enquiring for a Killekykyatha by name Fakirappa of Kalikapur village who was supposed to have camped in one of the suburbs of the town for doing the smithwork. People in the area could not at first give me any indication of his whereabouts as they did not know any person of the Killekyatha community camping in that area. People wanted to know from which village the said person belonged. When I told that he belonged to Kalikapur village they directed me to the temporary residence of the person of Kalikapur village. But I could not meet him as by then, he had moved to another village in Navalgund taluka of Dharwar district. Later when I had met Fakirappa at Kalikapur village and told him about my visit to his residence at Dharwar, he informed me that he usually told the people that he belonged to 'Kalaigar' (*smithwork*) community and not 'Killekyatha', and hence there was some difficulty in identifying him at Dharwar.

Some of the Killekyatha have proved to be well versed in fine arts like singing, and playing instruments For instance, Kesyappa, Ramappa, Fakirappa, Hanumappa of Kalikapur participate in the *bhajans* (prayers) held in the villages and even women participate in the singing of 'soban (folk) songs on such occassions like child birth, marriage, and puberty ceremonies held in the houses of some castes like the Shepherd, Korava, Kumbar, Maratha, and others in the villages with whom they come in contact. The names of Yellamma, Fakirappa, of Kalikapur who earned reputation for their singing ability are mentioned.

While the Killekyatha provide their services on cash payment, sometimes they get food and old clothes as a gesture of friendship of those with whom they have developed intimacy. In times of illness, close acquintances among other communities in the villages take care in providing mediciés etc. In the case of death, the villagers help in arranging cremation of the dead. Hanumappa and Ramappa narrated two instances. In the case of Hanumappa, his lonely son had died at a town place, which is ten miles away from Kalikapur and his acquaintances of other castes of the town helped him to conduct the funeral. Ramappa's brother died in a village but his close acquaintances at the place of his camp cooperated with him in the hour of his sorrow. In case of financial necessity the sedentary people in the villages help the Killekyatha by giving them loans, if only the Killekyatha wanting such help are known to them very closely. Mayappa's example is illustrative. Mayappa visits a particular village in Halyal taluka in North Canary district every year and besides doing the occupation of fastening selvages of blankets, undertakes the job of agricultural labour along with his family members. In the year 1970, he wanted money in order to perform the marriage of his son. When he

tried to find some resources at Kalikapur, none helped him as he wanted a loan of Rs. 500. He was not willing to pledge his lands. Since he keeps on moving for major part of the village the two richinen of the village whom he knew, did not help him. He went to the village where he goes every year and approached the Maratha peasant whom he knew since long and in whose field he occasionally worked. He not only gave the required loan but also attended the marriage of Mayappa's son which was held at a place, quite far away from that of the Maratha peasant. Of course, money was given on condition to either pay in easy instalments or work in the fields of the peasant whichever way Mayappa and his family members liked to repay the debt.

The Killekyatha find it useful to visit the specific areas every year. The taluka or the 'sides' where they move are broadly fixed. There may be small variation. For example, if a family wants to return to Kalikapur on health ground, or for attending a marriage, there may be a termination or slight change in the itinerary. In most cases the Killekyatha move in the areas where they are known. Thus, there movements are repetitive.

PERIOD

Information on the period of movement was given generally in terms of months of an year. The Table 8 gives the data for the period of movement of the nomadic families who had responded to the query relating to the periodicity of their movement.

Table 8 : *Periodicity of movement in villages*

Sl. No.	Period of movement	No. of families moving in villages
1.	Between 1-2 months	1
2.	Between 3-4 months	4
3.	Between 5-6 months	7
4.	Between 7-8 months	2
5.	Between 9-10 months	3
6.	Between 11-12 months	3
	Total	20

From the table it is clear that nearly 40 % (8 families) were found to be moving for major part of the year and 35% (7 families) for more than five months. These families start their journeys after the annual Kalikamma fair of Kalikapur village is over and return to the village after the rainy season starts. Those families whose period of movement is more than six months, generally return to the base camp of Kalikapur before the annual fair begins. Those whose movement is between 11-12 months usually take opportunity to return to the annual fair for a short time and leave the base camp when the fair is over.

LENGTH

The nomadic families were found to be moving since several years. To the query since how long they were in movement the response was in terms of approximate years. The data is given in the three broad categories as shown in Table 9.

Table 9 : *Nomadic families and their length of movement*

Sl. No.	Since how long moving	Number of families
1.	Between 5-15 years	6
2.	Between 16-25 years	7
3.	More than 25 years	7
	Total	20

It may be observed from the above table that 70 % (14 families) were found to be moving since more than 15 years. It indicates that among the nomadic families there is continuity in leading nomadic life. Children of the nomadic families from early age become accustomed to leading nomadic life as they would be moving along with their parents. As they grow they gradually lean the 'nomadic occupations' of their parents from the very early age an usually follow their father's occupations.

MODE

The Killekyatha move from one village to the other on foot. They carry their personal belonings which consists of a few utensils and clothes. In case the distance from a place to another is more than ten miles, they go to such a place by bus. For instance, when one desires to move in Nargund and Navalgund talukas of Dharwar district, or Bagalkot and Badami talukas in Bijapur district, one takes recourse to walking from one village to the other. In case one wants to go to Saundatti or Bailhongal talukas in Belgaum district, one goes by bus since these places are too far. Those who follow the occupation of fastening selvages of blankets and conducting leather picture show, personal baggages are very few and members of a family can carry them on their head or shoulders. The baggages of the people engaged in smithwork are heavy but a Killekyatha smithworker has no other means except to carry them personally. So far only one persson from Kalikapur has a horse on which he carries the luggages. It is said that his father was fond of rearing horses. The old man (about 85 years) is still alive and shows keen interest in looking after the animal.

The Killekyatha are stated to have migrated to Kalikapur in a small continent of three to four families. I shall be dealing the aspect of their migration and settlement at Kalikapur in the chapter on the processes of sedentarization. Here I would be discussing the question as to which place the Killekyatha consider as their ancestral home. Out of 20 informants, 12 persons stated that their ancestral home was Kalikapur. Three persons gave as Bankaneri in Badami taluka, Narsapur in Ramdurg taluka and Bargi in Madhol taluka respectively. Two stated that their ancestral place was Hebbal in Mudhol taluka (Bijapur district). Two others said that though they belonged to Kalikapur they preferred to say to others that they gave their ancestral place as Kolhapur in Maharashtra State when they move in the villages. They stated that by giving the name of Kolhapur the villagers give them smithwork, because the people regard the smithworkers from Kolhapr as good workers. Since they also speak Marathi, their claim is not disbelieved. One person answered the query by stating that he tells the name of any nearby place in order to impress upon the patrons that he was no stranger so that he can get work although he belongs to Kalikapur. But in due course of time identities of each person are established in the villages where they move. Those who identify the places other than Kalikapur except those two persos who give their ancestral place as Kolhapur as stated earlier, are the recent immigrants to Kalikapur. They have made Kalikapur as their permanent home place or base camp, but keep the identities of their ancestral places. In some cases, they still have kin-ties with the kinsfolk of villages prior to their migration to Kalikapur. They go to these places to attend annual festivals, marriages of their kinsfolk, and funeral. Names of the deities of their ancestral places are given to their children like Hebbalappa from Hebbal village. Since migration to Kalikapur, some are treating the village as their place of identity. Kalikapur has attracting the Killekyatha as the former has been now the dominance of the Killekyatha, unlike other villages such as Hebbal, Bargik Narsapur where it is stated that hardly 4-5 Killekyatha families are found to be staying.

To sum up, the area where the Killekyatha move is broadly the northern part of Dharwar district and eastern part of the Bijapur district. Owing to constant moving in the specific areas, since early age, the nomadic people come in closer contact with the sedentary people in the villages. The Kalikapur village has made many a Killekyatha to consider it as a permanent home which they identify as their ancestral place, though migrations have taken place two or three generations ago. This aspect of their identification of a particular place in course of time becomes significant from the point of their sedentarization.

CHAPTER V

VALUES AND WORLDVIEW

As has been pointed out in the chapter on Economic Organization it was observed that the economic circumstances are prime movers in compelling many a Killekyatha to continue to lead nomadic life. The Killekyatha of Kalikapur suffer from abject poverty and unemployment. Though the nomadic families generally suffer from poverty, the 'nomadic occupations' induce them to earn bare subsistence. Though people of several castes and communities also suffer from poverty and unemployment they do not take to nomadic life. But then a question may be asked as to why a particular group which suffers from abject poverty continues to lead nomadic life whereas there are several groups in similar situations which do not lead nomadic life. Perhaps, answer may be in the values and worldview of a group. It was, therefore, considered worthwhile to ascertain values and worldview of the Killekyatha to see if these aspects have any bearing on their nomadic way of life apart from the economic factors discussed earlier.

A Schedule was used for the purpose of assessing their value pattern and aspects of worldview. Answer to the five questions relating to value pattern and eight pertaining to worldview were sought. 20 out of the 27 persons responded whose answers were found to be helpful in understanding values and worldview in the specific context of nomadism. Salient features of the responses are highlighted in the following sections.

VALUES

The Killekyatha recognize that nomadic life is hazardous and required continuous moving in contrast to the sedentary life. The following four suggestive questions were asked :

Why do they move ?

1. Is it for love of freedom ?
2. Is it for meiting different types of people ?
3. Is it for seeing different places ? or,
4. Is it for eking out a better living ?

These questions were designed on the basis of prior experience among nomadic people. I would cite an example. When I was travelling with Dr. Mistra to find out a suitable nomadic group we encountered a group in a town. When we posed the question why do they move, pat came the

reply : 'We enjoy meeting different people and seeing different places, besides earning our livelihood ; hence we move from one camp to the other'. When the same question was asked to the Killekyatha respondents, all the 20 of them had only one answer that they moved for 'eking out better living'. One of them went to the extent of saying that he moved not only to earn a livelihood but to earn more.

The second question was : 'what do they think are the advantages in leading nomadic life—material, emotional, spiritual—and what are the difficulties/problems in a nomadic life ?'. Informants realize that there are certain difficulties, viz., 1. Getting suitable place for camping, 2. Paucity of fuel for cooking in village camp sites, 3. Troubles from village headmen, 3. No privacy as they have to camp in public places like temples, mosques etc., 5. At times of illness, both physical and mental suffering is great in villages. In the case of those who follow the profession of smithwork carrying the heavy load of iron tools is a great problem. The only advantage is that they get work in each village, and this helps them to earn their livelihood. They, therefore, do not mind the difficulties. If they settle down in a village, they have to simply 'sit', for they cannot, do any work in a village, as they know only the 'nomadic occupations' ? Since childhood, they are used to nomadic life, and they have learnt to adjust to the hard life.

The third question related to perpetuation of nomadic life, that is, 'do they desire their children to perpetuate their way of nomadic life ? If so, why and how they train them ? If not, why not ?'. The response to these queries was that 65 % (13 persons) desire that their children should take to nomadic life. In their errands they take their children since childhood, and give them training. The children learn the trade, and adjust to nomadic circumstances. 35 % (7 informants) did not like their children to lead nomadic life. For them, there was no other way for they cannot send their children to school, under conditions of nomadism.

To the question, 'do they send their children to school ?' the data provided by those who are having children of school going age were 11 persons (55 %) and out of them more than half of them were not sending their children to school. The response of those whose childen were young did not give any answer.

The nomadic Killekyatha came in contact with various sedentary castes in the area where they move. Therefore it was thought that their constant interaction with sedentary people might give some assessment as to the people whose living is considered as comfortable life. As from the Killekyatha point of view mainly general question as to which caste/community group, they though lead a contented and comfortable life, and for what reasons, was posed. Most of the responses, thought they were

mainly impressionistic, indicated that it was the Lingayats and Kshatriya who led comfortable life, for, they possessed good quantity of land. The reasons adduced in case of Lingayats were that the latter not only own land but have good business which made them to lead comfortable life. Two persons said that Brahmins and Shepherds lead comfortable life because the former are in government service and earn much money, and latter possess wealth of sheep which helps them to earn good amount by selling sheep and wool.

What emerges from the above discussion is that the nomadic life is accepted by the Killekyatha not only for consideration of economic circumstances but also their attitude towards perpetuation of nomadic traditions though nomadic life has several difficulties. Many nomadic Killekyatha want their children to lead nomadic life for it would help them to earn a livelihood as stated earlier. There are persons who desire to give their children formal education. The reasons for leading nomadic life may precisely be summed up : 1. They get enough work when they move in the villages ; 2. In case they took to sedentary life in a village they have to work as mostly agricultural labourers. They find it hard to work in the fields as it involves continuous working throughout the day in varying climatic conditions for a fixed labour charge which is low from their point of view. They are mainly habituated to do lightwork. In the case of smithwork also, they take to the lightwork of repairing metal pots and do not do other kinds of blacksmithy. They have enough freedom if they followed their professions ; 3. When they return to their village with some savings they need not work, but spend their savings as they like. When members of the nomadic families among the Killekyatha return to the village for a brief stay and bring some money to spend, people of other castes in the village, in most cases, treat them 'well' by asking their welfare and other personal matters. They are addressed by respectful terms. They get loans if required, without difficulty. The Killekyatha state that they feel happy for such treatment in the villages. On the other hand, the Killekyatha of the settled families who are economically dependent upon the villagers, generally, are treated differently, which is not liked by the Killekyatha, as in many cases, the latter may be employees, debtors, defaulters and so on. Due to the differential treatment members of the nomadic families consider that this acquire some status in the village as they are independent persons. In the villages where they move, their status is considered similar to that of 'nomdic traders'. There are some persons among the nomadic families like Pundlik, Basappa Yallappa, Yamanappa, Hanumappa, who are conscious of this fact of special treatment and of the social stauts they are supposed to be acquiring. This consideration is one of the important factors which make many a Killekyatha continue to lead nomadic life. Incidently, I may mention here the

case of a man of 22 years from among the settled families whose desire to take to nomadism was guided by the consideration of the special treatment. The young man, in this case, works as an agricultural labourer in the fields of other peasants. He stated that he was fed up with the treatment meted to him by his rich employers. He said that he was thinking of taking to nomadic life by learning one of 'nomadic occupations', viz., 'repairing metal pots', which according to him, brought good earning so that he too was treated in a better way by the villagers in Kalikapur ; 4. To say in a general way, the expereience of the settled Killekyatha, who suffer from unemployment, underfeeding, indebtedness, and attitude of disrespect and indifference by the sedentary people in the village are a contributing factor in making many of the nomadic families to continue to lead the nomadic life, even when they think nomadic life in hazardous.

WORLDVIEW

While knowing their response to sending their children to school, it was intended to ask another question, which was thought to form a part of their worldview. The question was : 'How far do they desire to educate their sons/daughters. and why?' Among the response 15 % (3 persons) wanted that their sons got education upto B.A. They thought that it was easier to get jobs particularly in government, if one had this level of education. The minimum of a pass in Matric is intensely desired. The model before them is that of one Ramappa of Kalikapur who after his Matric got a good job in a Bank at Bombay. Later he passed his B.A. and earns more than seven to eight hundred rupees a month. Ramappa's wife who is the daughter of one elder who leads a nomadic life. The latter circulates the news of his son-in-law's prosperity. The Killekyatha do not like to give higher education to girls. The maximum limit they envisage is 7th standard, for girls are to be married, and it is enough if they could read and write. It is difficult to find a husband for an educated girl. One girl, of settled Killekyatha family could not, for long time, get an offer for marriage, because she had completed 8th standard. Ultimately, she had to consent for marrying an uneducated boy, though reluctantly, as there was no suitable educated boy among their close kin whom she could marry.

Though the nomadic Killekyatha do not desire to work in the field as labourers and actually cultivate lands. They, however, wish to have lands. They wish mainly to supervise and manage land as many well to do peasants of other castes like kshatriya, Shephards, and Lingayats in the villages do. When the query as to 'what are their wishes ambitions in life, and how do they hope to achieve them was made, the overall response was that they desired to have sufficient lands in their possession. The quantum of land required by individual families varied a little. The

quantum required per family usually is between three to four *kurige* (1 *kurige*-4 acres), if fertile and yield good returns in groundnuts, *jola*, and cotton. The area where they live has black soil and is dependent upon rains. In case, they got good lands, their desire is to cultivate sugar cane by employing electric pump sets, as some wealthier peasants are doing. To them, the question became academic for they cannot dream of possessing lands. In the area, the land is scarce and is also very dear. It is said that an acre of land costs more than four thousand rupees, if the land has a good yielding.

Many a persons tried to be humble and said that their immediate ambition was to maintain a good life, have a good house at Kalikapur, and gave education to their children and bring them up. To achieve this they have to work hard.

As already discussed in the chapter on the economic organization some families possess land but the average acreage do not work upto even three acres. Such small quantity of land is an uneconomic holding and hence they lease their land on the contract of tenure to other persons before they start on movement. Their desire to have more land is made clear in their discussions but they do not have means to achieve their goal, for their 'momadic occupations' only help them to eke out a living. They may save some money during their errands but they ae required to spend some money when they return to the village for their maintenance.

In order to assess how they view the good or bad qualities in a person, the following question was asked : 'whom do they consider an ideal man woman ? and what qualities of head and heart does he or she have ?' The response was almost unanimous. It was the qualities of helping others in times of difficulties, protecting old parents in their sentility following the norms of their community, speaking humbly, which they considered ideal for a man. For a woman, the ideal qualities are : respecting her husband, chastity, helping others, good speech, treating old people kindly. Not having these qaulities might make them bad persons.

Ideas concerning heaven and hell

Regarding their belief in heaven and hell, the question posed was : 'Do they believe in heaven and hell ; what takes one to heaven hell ? Where are they and what they are like ?' The responses interestingly consisted of two viewpoints. According to one viewpoint, the heaven and hell exist the heaven beyond the sky, and the hell underneath the earth. Informants would point out by showing their hands—one above, and the other below. The other point of view is that there are no heaven and hell. Both are non-existent concepts. Men have created them. One informant,

however, said that they are in *chandraloka* (world of moon), while another said that he did not know anything about them.

People of both the view points were unanimous in one point, namely, that it was the *dharma* or the *karma* which took human beings to heaven or hell respectively. To them, the *dharma* is good behaviour or action. Giving alms to poor, presenting clothes, or feeding the poor constitute good actions. *Dharma* is understood as a synonym to *dana* (giving gifts). By doing *dharma*, one earns merit. i.e., *Punya*. The *karma* refer to bad actions like cheating others for one's benefit, troubling others using abusive languages etc. Such actions are considered as *Papa*. The concepts of heaven and hell are linked to the ideas of *dharma* and *punya*, and *karma* and *papa*. One who does *dharma* goes to heaven, and hell is the above of those who do *karma*. In the region where the nomadic famiiies move, the sayings of Basaweshwar[1] are very popular ; and their has been a great impact on the Killekyatha also as is revealed by many in their responses.

Adharma, according to them is not doing good acts, for e.g., not doing *dharma* or doing *karma* as described above. To the question, 'what do they consider to be their *dharma*' they repeated the same answerl inking it to the ideas of *dharma* and *karma*. Another question was asked namely, 'do they believe that their *dharma* and *karma* will be rewarded in this world or in their next life, or of their children ?' 60% (12 persons) of the answers revealed that the rewards of the *dharma* and *karma* of a person are going to them in their next life. 30 % (6 persons) of them opined that their children would get the reward. One informant said that one got the rewards in one's life itself and another pleaded his ignorance on the subject.

In order to understand their eschaeotological belief, the following question was asked : 'Do they believe in the life after death ? Explain.' These was considerable amount of diverse thinking on the subject. Sixty percent (12 persons) said that the life after the death of a person goes to heaven as the people say. Twenty percent (4 persons) had no idea as to what happens to life after one's death. One person said that the life goes to *yamaloka* (world of god Yama). Another said that the servants of god Yama (*yamaduta*) take the life to god Shri Krishna. A third was of the opinion that if there was good *guru* (teacher) to guide one, his life goes to heaven. The good and bad actions (*punaya and napa*) are responsible for one's life going to *sivaloka* (world of god Siva), and *yamaloka* respectively was the response of an old man who is considered as a knowledgeable person. While answering this question, the Killekyatha had differed from answers they gave to the question of the existence of heaven and hell. The nomadic families come in contact with several people. They hear *vachanas*[2]. They also listen to the various

discourses given by people of different schools of thought like veerasaivaism, Sisuvinhal Fakirswami, Ramarudha *sampardaya* (sect), Nijaguna Sivayogi's Kaivalya system, Murugharajendraswami Math, Brahmin *Kirtankaras* (exponents) etc. Therefore we could see varying opinions on the questions concerning behaviour pattern and eschaeotological beliefs.

From their worldview, emerges their attitude towards life. One is supposed to be good, help others in time of need be honest, and give alms to the poor which is an act of *punya* and ultimately take one to heaven, or help one's life to have a good use. They rarely seek any alms on the contrary. Incidently, it may be stated here that while nomadic communities like Kunchi-Korava, Bhat, Jogi, Budbudiki, live on begging alms, no instances of begging by the Killekyatha are heard. Begging according to them is an act of '*karma*', bad action. Honest work itself is desired of them. Perhaps, their values and worldview have made them lead nomadic life.

NOTES

1. Basaveshwar (12th Century)—Founder of Veerasaivism propatated through his *vachana* that concepts of heaven and hell are to be conceived in one's good and bad actions respectively.

2. *Vachana* menans compositions in Kannada which are 'aphoristic in form and rhythmic in style and words'. (Karnataka through the Ages, 1968 : 371). *Bhakti* (devotion to God) was propoagated by Veerasaiva philosophers through the medium of *vachana*.

CHAPTER VI

ASPECTS OF SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

In this section I propose to breifly discuss some aspects of the social and religious life of the Killekyatha with particular reference to their nomadic life.

FAMILY

It was observed that the Killekyatha usually have small households consisting of a married couple and their children, which may be categoried as elementary form. Traditionally the Killekyatha moved in the villages not in groups but in individual families. When a household survey was made, the composition of the Killekyatha was found to be as given in Table 10.

It may be observed from Table 19 that elementary families including with other kin consititute about 74 %. Among the nomadic families in one family a man has married his first wife's sister as he had no children from his first wife and due to insistence of the latter. Single members, and persons living with their kin not covered in the elementary and extended families have been included in the last category, i.e. of the incomplete families.

Table 10 : *Composition of the families*

Sl. No.	Type	Number of families settled	nomadic	total	Percent
1	Elementary families : Man, his wife, and their unmarried children	9	13	22	47.8
2	Elementary families with other kin (such as man's first wife's children etc.)	6	6	12	26.1
3	Extended families : Man, his wife, their married and unmarried children	—	4	4	8.7
4	Polygenous families : Man, his two wives, and their children	—	1	1	2.2
5	Incomplete families	4	3	7	15.2
		19	27	46	100.0

Sons and daughters are married at an young age. Sons after their marriage usually do not live with their parents. The latter may decide to settle down at Kalikapur due to senility. Married sons move in the villages separately with their spouse. Daughters go to live with their husbands after marriage. Formerly as the people moved in joint families there were no difficulties in taking their young married wives. It was stated that with the smaller families men do not feel secure to take with them their young married wives. Due to some families settling down in Kalikapur, it is easier for the Killekyatha to leave their young married wives with their near kin. They may take their wives after the latter became mother of two or three children. A mother of two or three children it is considered can freely move and easily communicate with women in the village for getting the work of stitching quilts. Some youngsters like Pundlik and Yamunappa think that taking their young wives with them is somewhat insecure as some 'bad' men may tease their women as they camp in lonely places when menfolk are not in the camps. Another reason given by Pundlik was that young married women of other castes in the villages which includes Kalikapur do not send their women even to fetch water from the village well or pond, for the above stated reason and he does not want their young women who are good looking, from his view point, to be shown to others in the villages. Of course, this attitude is developing due to their greater contact with the villagers. In earlier times since their people used to move with several kin such as uncles, aunts, brothers and their wives, the younger married women stayed in the camps and elderly women moved in the villages to get work for stitching quilts and to do the work of tattooing. But long settlement of a few families has become convenient for them to leave their women in the houses of their elder kin. In case of necessity, elderly women accompany. Yamunappa's mother-in-law accompanies her daughter who has a child of one year old when her son-in-law takes his wife with him. But many a time the son-in-law moves alone leaving his wife in the house of her parents at Kalikapur.

Men find it very useful to take with them their womenfolk as the latter can take care of domestic functions such as cooking, washing clothes of their menfolk etc. Besides the domenstic work, women do the work of stitching quilts and supplement their family's income as already discussed earlier. Usually therefore, the individual family is a unit except in such circumstances where a man has an young married wife and who has no elderly women to accompany him during his errands.

When young men move singly they may take some younger girl of 10-12 years of age to cook for them. The case of Pundlik may be cited. Pundlik is an young man of 23 years of age. He has not been taking his wife since his marriage. His parents lead settled life at Kalikapur and

his wife stays with her parents-in-law. He is a smithworker and earns considerable money in his errands. As his wife stays at Kalikapur he frequently returns to Kalikapur. During his movement he is taking his father's brother's daughter, who is twelve years of age. The girl not only cooks the food but also helps Pundlik in turning the fan at the time of smithwork.

The trend nowadays is that during their movements elderly men take with them their wives and children and the younger men move singly or with young girls to help them leaving their wives with their near kin at Kalikapur.

COMPOSITION OF CAMPS

The Killekyatha camp in the villages either in the temples or in mosques. Since they move in individual families, whatever is earned it is spent for the family. Sometimes they take members of other families, when they may confront difficulties in the form of sharing their incomes. For such works like leather picture shows, and repairing metal pots, they may need to go with others as assistance under such work conditions becomes necessary. Sometimes they take with them other members, thoug they may quarrel but they settle their disputes among themselves. Under the crcumstances of work conditions they make necessary adjustment.

HOUSE AND HOUSE SITES

It was said that earlier 3 to 4 Killekyatha families were found to have made Kalikapur as their base camp by earecting thatched houses in the outskirts near the settlement of the Harijans. The then Kshatriya headman of the village was said to have encouraged the Killekyatha, who, though moved for major part of the year used to return to Kalikapur at the time of the annual festival of Kalikamma. Due to the population growth and migration from other villages a separate settlement has come into being has come into being. Most of the houses of the Killekyatha in the *Killekyathar vathar* of Kalikapur are well built with mudroofs, commonly found in the area. There are ten houses with thatched roofs also. One person who was staying at the place of his work has recently built a stone house which he wants to occupy after his retirement as he was in government service. There are a few sites owned by nomadic families as shown in the sketch of the *Killekyathar vathar*. Since these families were constantly moving and had not enugh funds to build houses, the sites have been remaining vacant. When these families return to Kalikapur after their errands usually to attend the annual fair of the village, they camp near the vacant places, with their kin, or live in the empty houses of the other Killekyatha.

MATERIAL EQUIPMENT

When nomadic families move in the villages they carry with them the articles required by them for camping, cooking, and for their work. Since their camping place is a temple, or a mosque of a village, their minimum needs are a cloth for bed spread and blankets or *chaders* for covering. *Koudis* are handy in this regard. A nomadic family, therefore, keeps 2-3 *koudi*. For the purpose of cooking, they carry an iron pan, a few earthen pots, a copper or a mud pitcher for storing water. The staple diet is mainly bread (*rotti*) made of millet. Earthen pots solve their problem of extra vessals. Those who have settled are found to possess a few articles of aluminium and other metals. The nomadic families carry their garments and other material equipment in cloth bags. Those who follow the occupation of conducting leather picture shows carry the bundle of leather pictures carefully tied in a woolen blanket (*kambli*). Since the luggage is not heavy, they travel the distances on foot. In the case of those whose profession is smithwork, however, there is an additional burden of carrying the heavy iron implements, and fan (*Pankha*). As mainly the younger people have taken to the smithwork, they carry the heavy load themselves.

DRESS

Men and women wear the type of dress that is very common in the area. Man wears five cubits garment known *dhotra* with a *kachche* style. In the *kachche* style, one end of the *dhotra* is tied to the waist in a knot and the other is drawn in between the legs with folds in the front, and tucked in the back. A tailor stitched shirt is worn as upper garment. The headgear consists of five cubits length of white superior cloth known as *rumal* or *pataka*, and it is worn by tying it to the head, and one end of it is slightly left loose. Younger boys use Gandhi cap. Chappals are used by men. Women wear a *seere* (sari) or nine yards in length, with one end of it covering the head. It may be noted here that none of them were sari with a *kachche* style which is commonly found to be among Marathi speaking communities of Maharashtra—though the Killekyatha being a Marathi speaking group—some times claiming ancestry to Maratha peasants. A blouse (*kubusa*) is worn as upper garment. Women do not use chappals. Ear rings made of gold are worn by women. Formerly women did not use nose rings. The Killekyatha women were distinguished by this character. Due to the influence of women of the various castes of of Kalikapur and other villages and also not to be distinguished so clearly as the Killekyatha women have started adorning their nose with nose ring. A black bead string with two round pieces of gold (*mangalsutra*) are women by married women. Silver rings adorn their toes. The Killekyatha

women's prized possession is a string of thin gold beads (*bormala*). Otherwise they do not have any other valuable ornaments. Among the settled Killekyatha, however, chains of gold of different designs are possessed by some women.

AUTHORITY

Man wields authority as the head of the family, and takes the responsibility of maintenance of the family. Women's primary role is to look after their children and do the household work, but women also were found to be attending to certain works, like that of stitching quilts, tattooing and agricultural jobs when they are with their menfolk on movement. The children of the families who move in the villages have opportunities of bearing the hard life of nomadism and adjusting to it. The father generally trains his sons in learning their traditional professions. Women learn the occupation of sittching quilts. It was observed that during their move-movements youngsters are helping their parents in their economic pursuits. As explained in the previous chapter, it is difficult to send children to school when a family takes to nomadic life. This situation would force the children to take to nomadism unless they happen to get formal education and get jobs, or would lead them to take to settled life at Kalikapur or in other villages. We have examples of both the categories. Two sons of Somappa whose family members move, have completed S.S.L.C. course due to the help of their brothers and were trying to get jobs preferably in government. Sons of Hanumanthappa, Mayappa, Fakirappa and Ramappa to mention a few cases, on the other hand, have taken to nomadic life since their childhood due to the compulsions of their circumstances. The level of education among the Killekyatha is low, as may be seen from the following discussion.

LEVEL OF EDUCATION

In order to assess the level of education data on literacy among the 46 Killekyatha families were collected. Out of the 96 men above the age of five years, 25 persons were found to have formal education in schools. The following table shows the level of education in relation to the age-groups of the literates.

Two boys have gone to a town for studying, and if we exclude these boys, the level education is mostly upto the 4th standard, as 64 % (16 persons) of men as having educational attainment among the literates up to the primary level. If we take the percentage of literary as such 26 % of men (25 out 96) are literates. If we considered the age groups, those above 26 years had some education. Among the women, two girls out of 87 had education upto the 4th standard and one girl had completed her

Table 11 : *Educational attainment according to different age-groups*

Sl. No.	Educational category	Age groups				Total
		5—15 years	16—25 years	26—35 years	above 30 years	
1.	Between 1st-2nd standard	3	1	1	1	6
2.	Between 3rd-4th standard	3	3	2	2	10
3.	Between 5th-7th standard	3	—	1	2	6
4.	Between 8th— S. S. L. C.	—	2	—	1	3
	Total	9	6	4	6	25

8th standard. The Killekyatha said that while they desired to educate their men as much as possible they do not like to give more education to girls. We have already noted this aspect in the previous chapter.

RITES OF PASSAGE

I shall be limiting the description on the rites of passage by briefly touching the salient features on them.

Childbirth ; A woman in advanced stage of pregnancy, usually around 8th months is brought back to the base camp, viz, Kalikapur for the purpose of delivery. The woman stays either with her parents or parents-in-law till childbirth and subsequent postnatal treatment. Elderly Killekyatha women attend to the childbirth.

The name giving ceremony (*nov thavav*) is observed on the 5th or 13th day. One of the mother's younger brother digs a hole (*nahani*) near the house on the day of the childbirth and puts the severed umbilical cord etc., there. on the day of name gving ceremony he covers the *nahani*. He is given half a price of dried cocoanut and some cash ranging from five annas to five rupees. Women wave lamps placed in a plate (*arati*) and distribute a special dish known as *guggari* (made of five kinds of grains). Women also sing 'soban' songs in Kannada. The observance is almost similar in the case of other lower castes of Kalikapur. The names given to the children relate to the deities of Kalikapur, suh as Kalika and Durgamma goddesses and god Hanumant. During their movement in the villages they might take vows to deities of a particular village, or a centre of worship or to the deities of Moharrum. Therefore such names like Yallappa, Yallavva, Basavant, Basavva, Siddappa, Siddavva, Kakirappa, Fakiravva, and Yamunappa, Yamunavva are common among them. The names like

Fakirappa, Fakiravva and Yamunappa and Yamunavva are those of the deities of Moharrum.

PUBERTY

When girl attains puberty she is made to sit in a separate house if they are at Kalikapur or takes a separate place if they are at a caming place during their movement. The period of such segragation is for five days. Every day women gather in the evening to greet the girl, and wave *arati* (lamp) by singing 'soban' songs. On the fifth day the girl is given a ceremonical bath. The girl is also given a sweet dish made in wheat flour and ghee. Women are given a feast. At the camping place women usually belonging to shephered, potter, Korava and other castes help them in the performance of puberty rites. It is said that formerly these rituals were not elaborate but due to their contact with local kannada castes, they have taken to them especially singing 'soban' songs and giving sweet dishes etc.

MARRIAGE

Parents of the boys and girls negotiate and settle the mariage (*lagna*). The age of marriage for the boys is usually between 17-20 years and for the girls it is between 12-13 years. Pre-puberty marriages also take place. There are two types of betrothal (*vilya shastra*). One is known as *chikka vilva shastra* (preliminary betrothal). When elders decide the child couples on oral promise and distribute betel and betel leaves for having made the decisions, it is known as preliminary batrothal. But such pro mises may break afterwards. When the case of a boy aged 18 years came up for marriage with a girl of five years old for which elders of Kalikapur were attempting to perform the *chikkavilya shastra*, the boy refused for such commitment as the girl was too young although the girl's party was interested. In the second type which is known as *dodda vilya shastra*, the betrothal takes place in a more formal way with presentation of gifts (mainly in the form of cloth) to the girl. In case of violation, the caste council (*Daiva*) may interfere. Customarily the *dodda vilya shastra* is a commitment.

The nomadic families try to settle the marriage when they stay at their base camp of Kalikapur. During their movements they may initiate marriage negotiations with other Killekyatha whom they meet in villages, but final settlement usually takes place only at Kalikapur when close kin are invited. For instance, when Fakirappa's son's marriage was to be settled with the daughter of Ramappa of Hallur village the concerned parties had to meet at Kalikapur and the betrothal ceremony conducted, although they had negotiated the marriage in one of the camping places Ramdurg town. They resumed their camps after performing the betrothal ceremony at Kalikapur.

The bride price (*deja*, *tera*) is given by the boy's party. The amount of *deja* paid is eighty rupees, but there may be adjustments between the parties if there is an agreement. The boy's party has to bear the two-thirds of expenses for meeting the ceremonial feasts. The boy has also to give a good sari to the bride, and two or three ordinary saries to his near kin. Thus, for a marriage, the boy's party needs a minimum of Rupees five hundred. Financial crisis puts them to much difficulties. Either boy's parents have to postpone the marriage of their son or sell their valuables. In 1970, Ramappa had to sell one and a half acres of land for the marriage of his son and to meet other expenses. When the marriage of Fakirappa's son was to be conducted the boy's father was about to pledge his two acres of land in his possession to a peasant of the neighbouring village, but the talks failed as the peasant did not agree to the conditions. The Lingayat richman, however, came to their rescue and advanced a loan of Rupees two hundred on condition that the boy returned the money as the latter was a capable person and was earning much money by attending to the smithwork. Another Rupees two hundred was got by selling the buffalo they had, and also by raising some loan from other sources, and with that money the marriage was conducted.

If the *vilya shastra* is not observed earlier, the same is done before the marriage is performed. At the time of marriage near kin even if they are in movement are invited. Prior to the marriage, the *deva karya*, that is appeasing the gods and ancestors, is also observed by both the parties in their respectives homes. The ritual food is offered to the deities, and also the metalled 'faces' (*maka*) of the dead ancestors. Formerly on such occasions goats were sacrificed by the Killekyatha. In Kalikapur this practice is discontinued since 20-25 years as such practice is not found among other sedentary people of the area. But in places like Gokak and Mudhol talukas, the Killekyatha still take recourse to sacrificing goats as part of marriage ceremonies and serve the guests. When the marriage of Fakirappa's son was held at Hallur village in Gokak taluka, the groom's party was treated with mutton. There were many adverse coments from the Killekyatha of Kalikapur on this custom but all the guest partook the ritual meal.

There are a number of rituals observed by them during a marriage. I shall not go into the details of the observance as my focus was only to show the salient features of the marriage in the context of their nomadism as described above.

CLANS

While describing the importance of the roles of the different clans in the performance of a marriage of a Killekyatha, Gazetter of Bijapur

District (1884 : 192) and Enthoven (1922 : 232) state that several clans were required to do certain functions. The above authorities give the list of the following thirteen clans to have been found among the Killekyatha :

1. Ganachari
2. Shivachari
3. Neknar or Kattimani
4. Pachangi or Bhandari
5. Shindya or Halmani
6. Salva or Hogaluvike
7. Sasnik
8. Mohria
9. Shingan or Harkari
10. Dhruv or Mattemani
11. Vakuda
12. Dorkar
13. Dhumalkar

Among the above thirteen clans, at least the following eight had important roles during the marriage as recorded by the authorities referred above :

Name of the clan	*Functions*
1. Dhruv	Bringing articles like wheat, rice and other stores.
2. Shingan	Bidding the guests to the wedding.
3. Ganachari	Throwing the rice on the happy pair.
4. Shivachari	Drawing the cross called *Nandi* on the curtain and holding it between the bride and the groom.
5. Shindya	Spreading the blanket for the couple.
6. Sasnik	Strewing rice on the blanket.
7. Neknar	Tying the hems of clothes of the married couples into a knot.
8. Pachangi	Attending to the five items given below. 1. Making a serpent of earth on *Nagpanchami* in the month of Shravan. 2. Distributing provisions equally among the castemen. 3. Taking Rupees nine from the bridegroom and spending Rupees one for betel leaves and nuts. 4. Distributing the sum equally among his caste people. 5. Preparing fire for smoking tobacco at caste meetings.

Though in such details the functions of each of clan are stated, what I found was that there were only two important clans at Kalikapur village namely Atak, and Neknar. Pachangi, Durve and More clans were also found in a few cases which are of recent contact. There is no reference to the Atak clan in the Gazetteer of Bijapur District (*ibid*) or by Enthoven (*ibid*). It appears that the Ganachari and Atak clans are one and the same When late Subanappa was contacted and asked to explain the functions of the different clans, he told that in older times there was some functional distribution among several clans, but he had not seen such a thing happening in his life time, as the marriages were held only between the two clans but at that time only men of the Atak clan performed the job of throwing rice on the couple, tying *mangalsutra*, while men of the Neknar clan performed the job of spreading the blanket, drawing the *Nandi* and tying the hems of the garment of the couple. Even after contracting marriage with other clans like Pachangi and Durve, the Atak and Neknar have been doing the job. In fact, the Killekyatha of Kalikapur are aware of five clans only, viz, Atak, Neknar, Pachangi, Durve and More. They have knowledge of two other clans, viz, Salvya, and Shindya who are supposed to be staying in the northern parts of Bijapur district. But so far they have no marital ties.

DEATH CEREMONIES

The dead are cremated. The Bijapur District Gazetteer (ibid, 197) states that the dead among the Killekyatha are buried, in the Lingayat fashion. But so far the information of the Killekyatha of Kalikapur are concerned, burial is done only in exceptional circumstances. When Subanappa died, the disciples of Ramarudha Matha desired that the man was buried as he was a saintly person, and the Killekyatha had to accept. Place for his buried was given in the field of the Kshatriya headman. When one Kallolleppa died, he was cremated, but his ashes were subsequently buried in the backyard of his house.

The body of the dead is carried in *koudi*. The Lingayats on the otherhand carry their dead in a specially built bier. Fakirappa's father before his death had expressed his desire to be carried in *viman* and not in *koudi* as it was considered a better funeral since many Lingayats, Kshatriyas and Kuruba's carried their dead in bier.

During their movement members of nomadic families take the help of local people in the village for cremation of their dead. If they are camping very near to Kalikapur the dead body is brought and cremated at Kalikapur.

The ritual impurity (*sutak*) accruing of death ends on the tenth day. In case the person dies during the movements the mourners would return

to Kalikapur for performing obsequies. On the eleventh day the house of the deceased is cleansed with cowdung and smeared with lime (if the house is of mud), and a feast is given to the people of the community.

After completion of the first month, a face (*maka*) is got made in silver metal representing the deceased. The *maka* is kept in the cloth bag containing such *makas* of other deceased persons. They are worshipped during marriage celebrations, and on *amavasya* (no moon day) days. The nomadic families carry the bag containing *maka* of their deceased elders (*hiriyaru*) with them. Opinion differs whether the *makas* are inherited by eldest son or youngest son. Both the persons may claim. Since possession of *makas* is a burden for nomadic families as there is fear of theft of them since they are made in silver, the *makas* are given to those kin who stay at Kalikapur.

KINSHIP

Two major clans among the Killekyatha or Kalikapur were found. Members of the three other clans have contracted marriages with the people of the two major clans as already described. There are no lineages in the genalogies taken upto the grand parental generation. The kinship terminologies used by the Killekyatha are both in Marathi and Kannada.

Referential terminologies for consanguineal and affinal kin are described here briefly. The terms used for father are *-ba*, *bap*, *baba* and for mother *ai*, *amma* ; for brother and sister, they are *bhau* and *bahin* respectively. But the Kannada terms *anna* and *tamma* for elder and younger brothers, and *akka* and *tangi* for elder and younger sisters are also used. The kinship terms for FaFa MoMo and Fa Mo, Mo, are *ajja* and *ajji* respectively. At this grand-parental generations, no terminological distinction is made.

Fa Br, Mo Si Hu, Hu Si Hu, and husband of one's stepmother are all denoted by the term *kaka*, if younger, and with a prefix *thor*, if older. The word *kaki* denotes the kin Fa Br Wi, Mo Si Fa Wi (not one's mother) If younger, and with a prefix *thor* to refer older ones.

The Fa Si Hu is referred by the term *mama*, if older, is indicative of the marriage with Mo Br Da. The terms indicate prevalence of cross-cousin marriage-both matri-- and patri-lateral types. Uncle-nicee marriages also take place. In the genealogies of the settled and nomadic families it was observed that there were (1) three cases of marriage with Mo Bi Da ; (2) two cases with Fa Si Da ; (3) and three cases wtith Si Da.

The terms for distant collateral Kin depend upon the age and usage. Such terms like Brother, sister are used. Younger kin are referred to by the names.

The terms for wife is *bavako*. Husband is referred by the term *gho*. The common word used for husband in Marathi is *nayara*. Karve (1953 : 145-150) does not list the term among the terms denoting Husband, but she states that in Marathi the term *gho* is found. She has, however, tried to link it with Bengali *ogo* (ibid, 111 f.n. and 173). The term is used on the westcoast of Maharashtra according to her. Due to the retention of this specific term, can we infer that the Killekyatha migrated from west-coast to Deccan plataue. As far as we know the Killekyatha are not found there, nor do they move that side. Perhaps the word might have reference to earlier sanskiritic or other etymological forms.

In their kinship system, the terminological structure closely resembles the Dravidian system. The constant interaction with the Kannada people might have influenced the Killekyatha, a Marathi speaking community.

MECHANISM OF SOCIAL CONTROL

The Killekyatha settlement at Kalikapur has acquired some stability as there are nearly 46 families whose members have made Kalikapur village as their permanent home place. Most of the nomadic families return to their base camp after the rainy season, that is, during the months July to August. People start on their movement once again, after the annual festival at the village is over. At the time of the festival the Killekyatha settlement bustles with activities like conducting prayers, negotiating marriage, or settling disputes, if any. If a Killekyatha has any problem, to be solved he may to summon the panchayat of elders of the community known as *Daiva*.

DAIVA (PANCHAYAT)

There is no formal *Panchayat* among the Killekyatha, either at the village, or at the regional level. Informally elders (only men) meet at some place, under a neem tree or a stone platform in the settlement, to discuss matters relating to their community. This informal meeting is called *Daiva*. It may be noted here that the word *Daiva* is used by the people of other castes in the village for their informal meetings. The word is also found to be used for the informal meetings of the people of the entire village (*Daiva* of the village). Any person of the settlement can call a *Daiva* if he has any problems but shall have to bear the cost of betel leaves, betal nuts and *bidi* (leafy cigarette) which is usually distributed to the members on the occasion of a meeting. The few elderly persons who are leading a settled life at Kalikapur have acquired some voice in dealing with the matters concerning their people. Members who go on movement can call the *Daiva* if they have any problems to be settled by them but under such circumstances they may have to approach one or more persons

among the five influencial persons for prompt and favourable action. Among the nomadic families, one or two persons were said to be actively participating. Nevertheless, the decisions taken by the *Daiva* are usually accepted by all the Killekyatha of Kalikapur. There were, however, cases of vilolations of the decision but then such cases are taken tothe Lingayat rich man of the village for adjudication, whose verdict is final. In case his decision is not accepted the offender has no place in Kalikapur as the five influential men insist on honouring the decision of the village elder. Prior to my field-work, an incident had happened in which a Killekyatha youth was involved. The youth, by name Yallappa, had fled away with a sister of the Kshatriya headman, of course, with the consent of the girl. The Kshatriya headman had later traced his sister in a distant village and had brought her back but he was threatening to severely punish the youth if he saw him at the village. The *Daiva* of the Killekyatha had asked the offender to apologise to the Kshatriya headman in the presence of the Lingayat richman. The latter was prepared to mediate in the dispute to avoid any serious fighting between the Kshatriya headman, and the youth, which would have indirectly involve the Kshatriya and the Killekyatha. But the youth had not agreed. When the Killekyatha elders insisted that the youth abide by the decision he left the village. In my second field trip I found him in the village. It was revealed that he was taken into the village only after he had abided by the decision of the *Daiva.*

The *Daiva* deals with the cases relating mainly to the intra-community affairs, such as fixation of marriages, granting divorce, or in fights among the members etc. Sometimes it may help to take decisions to deal matters concerning inter caste, and also other issues pertaining to the village. It was stated that if a member performs the marriage of his son in the house of the bride living in another village, he has to feed the *Daiva* when he returns with the married couple after the marriage as the custom has it. If he fails then the *Daiva* brings force. Mayappa's case is an example. Mayappa performed the marriage of his son in 1970, but failed to keep the promise to feed the *Daiva* by not returning to the village. When he returned after lapse of two months he could not escape giving refreshments to the *Daiva.* There was a case of fighting between a Killekyatha boy and a Lingayat man in 1969. The former was said to have been beaten by the latter as the boy had stolen a couple of sugarcane in the latter's field and had argued with him heatedly defending his own position by stating that he had not committed the said offence. The *Daiva* got irritated over the issue that the Lingayat man had assaulted a person of their community instead of reporting the matter to the *Daiva.* The timely intervention of the village elders and the richman saved the situation. Both the parties were warned. As the Lingayat man was a

close relative of the richman, the warning given to him was regarded as a triumph for the *Daiva* of the Killekyatha. The *Daiva* is made use of for purposes of canvassing during elections, or on other occasions when the village elders need the services or cooperation of the Killekyatha.

Though the *Daiva* is functioning it cannot be considered as very effective institution. For instance, if a member violates its decision the *Daiva* cannot implement effectively as may be seen from the case of Yallappa-versus-the Kshatriya headman. The boy wanted to return to the village as his other family members are living and hence he obeyed the advice of the *Daiva* and also of the village elder. Sometimes the offenders might leave the village and settle down in other villages. There was the case of Ramappa who did not return to the village in 1970-71 as he had certain grouse against his own brother in sharing of their property. His brother was an influential member of the *Daiva* and was working in the store house of the richman of the village as a casual labourer. Ramappa was not willing to accept the decision of the *Daiva* as the latter had favoured his brother. Ramappa's lone supporter told me in 1971 that Ramappa might permanently leave Kalikapur itself. As Ramappa has taken to movement he does not consider it very necessary to obey the *Daiva* as the decision was not in his favour. He may visit during the annual festival if he wants. Whatever be the circumstances the *Daiva* exists due to the initiative of the leaders. I shall briefly mention here the role of leaders among the Killekyatha.

LEADERSHIP

Until an elder Subanappa became old, he was the undisputed leader of the Killekyatha of Kalikapur. He never permitted his people to drink, or come in contact with the families of prostitutes living in the neighbouring colony. At the time of the fieldwork he was very old (more than eighty years, now dead). and he was unhappy as none cared for his advice. Many had taken to drinking, and there were cases of people going to prostitutes belonging to the scheduled castes. Hanumappa is posing himself to be the leader of his people. He is forty years old, strong and good at speaking, both tin Marathi and Kannada. He had developed close contacts with the Lingayat richman of the village and also his sons. The latter are not only rich but are leaders of the village. They mostly represent a Village Panchayat, and Taluka Board. Hanumappa, once lead the life of a nomad for several years after he had sold his four acres of land to his sister's husband. His babits of gambling and playing card had made him incur heavy debt and consequently to sell his lands. About five years back, he decided to settle down at Kalikapur. When there was relaxation of Prohibition Law in that area, he has taken contract for selling toddy and arrack.

He gets support—both financial and moral—from the village leaders and he too helps them when they need his help during elections he canvassed for the persons chosen by them. He is consulted for the matters relating to welfare of the Killekyatha. It was observed that he has certain qualities of leadership. He is a courageous man. He tries to help the people of his community as well as those of other castes. He actively participates whether it is a festival, election meeting, or funeral. He is treated with much respect by the Killekyatha and also by people of the village. He is black and well built. So people have affectionately nicknamed him as 'Kariyappa' (blackie).

The Lingayat richman of Kalikapur and his two sons are the important leaders of the village. They take the services of Hanumappa. The latter too gets some benifits from them. He got licence for keeping an arrack shop from the authorities through their mediation. He is stated to have actively participated in electionering work along with them, in the previous elections. In return he is expecting to get cash grants for building houses. When I was at Kalikapur the member of Taluka Development Board told me that he had sent a petition to the Governor for expedition cash grants to the Killekyatha for building houses. Hanumappa is trying to get some land for himself as he does not possess any land, through the help of these village leaders. He is also trying to help atleast some people of his community to get lands. The old man Subanappa was a spiritual leader but Hanumappa is a progressive leader.

Not only the Killekyatha of Kalikapur but also of other villages like Hebbal, Chichkandi etc., consult Hunumappa for their problems who helps them as much as possible. According to him a *samaj* (caste association) is required for their district (Bijapur) where the Killekyatha are large in number. The *samaj* can strive to estblish a hostel for their children in order to educate their children. The nomadic families cannot send their children to school under conditions of nomadism and hence the to estblish a hostel. He wants the Government to give them lands, and other financial help to take to agricultural work so that they can settle down at Kalikapur and other villages. It is not sure, how far he will be successful in organising his people, but in the process he may get land and a house site and other help for he has the blessings of the village leaders.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

DEITIES

The village Kalikapur has two main temples. One is that of goddess Kalikamma after whom the village was named, and the second one is that of Hanumanta. The Killekyatha have become devotees of these gods since their migration. The names of these deities are given to their children.

The annual festival in honour of the goddess Kalikamma which falls in the months of November-December, is a great event in the life of the Killekyatha. Many a nomadic families terminate their movements and return to the village for attending the festival. People of all castes of the village, and also of the neighbouring villages participate in the festival which is arranged by the Kshatriya headman. It is said the deity was the family deity of the Kshatriyas of the village. The Killekyatha make vows and worship the deity by offering fruits and cloth. The nomadic families before starting for their movement (*Sanchar*) go to the temple and offer prayers. On every Tuesday, usually the Killekyatha women go to the temple. Men salute the deity while passing by the temple. Hanumanta shrine is visited usually by men of Killekyatha community on every Satur day. Some persons keep fast on one time (*oppottu*). During *kartik* month (October-December) every Saturday special worship is conducted. Devotees of all castes attend. The Killekyatha offer fruits like cocoanut on the occasion.

There is an image of the deity known as Durgavva in the house of one Balappa in the Killekyatha settlement. Exclusively the deity is worshipped by the women of the Killekyatha. As the deity is considered to be power ful, women worhip on Tuesdays, Fridays and *amavasya* (No moon day).

The Yallamma deity of the Yallamma Hills in Saundatti in Belgaum district is a famous goddess throughout northern Karnatak, and it is said that she has devotees from Maharshtra State also. Most of the Killekyatha make pilgrimage to the temple, at the time of Bharat Hunnive (January). They cook a special dish (*holige*) in the name of the deity at the place, and partake ceremonial meals. When a family camps near a place close to the temple during therir nomadic errand, pay visits to the deity and offer prayers.

FESTIVALS

The festivals observed by the villagers such as Ugadi Holi, Karu Hunnive, Dasara, and Dipavali are also observed by the Killkyatha. Like others, they take bath, wear new clothes and partake special food. During Holi festival they are the most jubilant ones to participate inthe colour throwing play (*holi ata*). Some of the youths of the nomadic families may sometimes return for a day on the occasion from their camps to enjoy the fun. There is a small mosque at Kalikapur where the *tabuts* are enshrined during Moharrum festival. At the time of the Moharrum, shephard and Killekyatha are the active participants. Vows are made to the deity known as *ala habbada devaru* (deity of the Moharrum). The *tabuts* are carried to the *Killekyathar vathar*. Throwing of dried dates (*uttatti*) over the *tabuts* is very common. It is believed that the deity has

the power of curing deseases of children, and blessing a barren woman to beget children. When a women gets a child after making a vow to the deity, or a child servives after its birth, the name of the deity is given to such children. We can see from the list of names that there are many persons having the names of the deity, viz, Fakiravva, Fakirappa, Yamanuravva, Yamanurappa etc.

SECT

There are many devotees of Shri Ramarudha Swami of Ramarudha Matha at Bagalkot in Bijapur district in Kalikapur from among the Lingayat and Kuruba (shepherd) castes. Many a Killekyatha have become devotees of Shri Ramarudha Swami. By 1940's, the Lingayat richman had helped the devotees to build a shrine in the a name of Shri Ramarudha Swami. The sect belongs to Shri Siddharudda Sampradaya at Hubli—mainly *adwaita* (monism) in philosophical content. The sect has large number of devotees in the area. So far as the Killekyatha were concerned, it was (late) Subanappa who became the first disciple, and by his extreme skill in singing and expressing the tenets of Shri Ramarudha Swami and Nijaguna Sivayogi's Kaivalya system, he became very popular. He influenced many Killekyatha to become the disciples. He, along with some Killekyatha disciples, used to attend the *saptah* (seek long celebration) held in honour of Shri Ramarudha Swami during *MahaSivaratri* (February) at Bagalkot. When Subanappa died, his body was buried and the disciples from Lingayat, and Shephard castes have been collecting money to build a shrine on the graveyard of late Subanappa. It was observed that many of the nomadic families are the disciples of Shri Ramarudha Swami. Usually, when some families who are well versed in singing and playing instruments, arrange a *bhajan* (prayer) party at Kalikapur village, it is done in the night. The Kallekyatha devotees keep the photos of Shri Ramarudha Swami (now Chikka Ramarudha Swami) in their settlement, and sing songs, for the whole night. To such prayer meetings, disciples of other castes are also invited. The Ramarudha sect has provided the Killekyatha for their integration with the higher castes of the area. Once the Killekyatha who were considered as of inferior status and having criminal habits by the other people have since attained better status and are treated on par with the communities like the shephard.

MAGIC AND SORCERY

The Killekyatha were very frank in stating that they did not believe in ghosts and evil spirits. One informant interjected, 'Do you think that our people would be able to take to *sanchar* (movement) if they were to

believe in ghosts and afraid of them ? Our people are required to camp in lonely places near trees, big temples where none may give them company ?'. While they did not believe in such superntural beings, they believe in spirit possession as they witness that human beings are possessed by evil spirits and taken to temples and mosques for relief. They state that they have learnt from others to believe that there are spirits and the latter possess human beings. It is believed that when a person dies with some kind of desire (*asha*) becomes an evil spirit after death and tease the people.

They believe in 'evil eye' (*drusti*). Some people are considered to have 'bad eye' which affects adversely, if such persons were to see and think badly in any matter, like other people eating or dressing, or a buffalo giving good quantity of milk, etc. Affected persons may suffer severely. The most common remedy is to burn a mixture of few sticks of broom-sticks, dried chillies and salt after waving them on the affected ones anti-clockwise.

The Killekyatha do not believe in blackmagic and sorcery. They know that among other communities blackmagic and sorcery exist for which people go to such places like Ramdurg and Nargund for treatment. But they have not heard any such case among their people.

Many a Killekyatha believe in the efficacy of amulets (*yantra*). Especially cure forchildren by *yantras* is guaranteed. The *yantra* or what is known as *tayata* are got made by the priests of temples, or *Mullas* of mosques. When children suffer from any disease, or so-called 'fear', *tayata* are tied to their necks. During their movements, they consult the local people for preparation of *tayatas*. So far as astrology and palmistry are concerned the Killekyatha said that they never believed in them. One youth told that the astrologers are liars, they take money and tell things which never come true. Asked why a few women consulted a *kurra mama*—a nomadic astrologer from Andhra Pradesh, who was on movement in their village and who was giving him predictions, the youth said that for mere curiosity they might have consulted, but they did not believe. They have strong belief in the good and bad omen (*sakuna*). A good omen is that if a dog runs after spreading its ears and this omen indicates success if such an omen were to take place before a nomadic family is set for movement. The nomadic famlies may not start on their *sanchar* if they were to experience bad omens like a dog stopping after spreading its ears, or a cat passing from the right side, etc.

It may be observed from the foregoing discussions that the Killekyatha who were a small group of people consisting of 34 families when they first migrated to Kalikapur have established a compact settlement in the village and thus have become a part of the village life. Those who move in the

villages and lead nomadic life have closer socio-economic and religious links with the villagers. It was noted that the Killekyatha also have been attempting to establish their indentity with the Kalikapur village which has become a 'permanent' village in most cases as has been described in the various sections earlier.

It would be interesting to discuss whether this aspect of their closer identity and intereactions with a particular village would help the community to sedentarize, and if so, what are the processes of sedentarization. The next chapter deals with this subject at some length.

CHAPTER VII

PROCESS OF SEDENTARIZATION

Before describing the process of sedentarization let us explain what is sedentarization. Musham's (1959) definition brings into relief the salient features of sedentarization. According to him sedentarization is " .... a gradual and slow process, it is concerned mainly with a change in the economic importance of migratory movements in earning the means of subsistence, with the distance covered by the nomads in their migrations, the length of time they remain at a given locality, the attachment to one or several localities to which each family returns periodically, and only in the last place with the construction of a permanent dwelling" (1959 : 539). He distinguishes two processes, namely, spontaneous sedentarization and initiated sedentarization. In the 'spontaneous sedentraization' there is a "tendency of the nomadic population concerned to restrict the frequency and scope of its migration" (ibid).

It has been observed by many scholars that the nomadic groups in the various parts of Egypt and Iran and also other parts of the world are gradually settling down amongst the sedentary people, and such transformations have resulted in the nomadic groups becoming either seminomadic or sedentary. Writing on the Kurdish nomads Boi states, "The purely nomadic Kurds have almost completely disappeared to-day. They have in fact become seminomads, for nearly all of them have permanent dwellings in the plains of valleys which they return to in winter" (1966 : 18.) Krader draws the examples from Egypt and Iran and has the following to say : "The nomads of Egypt are no longer a factor to be recokned with. By the nineteen twenties, 90 percent of them had made the transiton to sedentary agriculture with stock raising as a supporting activity. The same transformation was made by the nomads of Turkey under Mustafa Kemal. In Iran, a large number of Bakhtiari, a people with a high development of nomadic pastoralism, have settled farming and a mixed economy at the present time ; the Gashgais have made the transition to a mixed farming and herding economy in a more limited degree ...." (1959 : 508).

Writing on the process of sedentarization of "passing from nomadic to settled society" among the Basseri tribe of South Persia, Barth (1961 : 108-09) describes the conditions under which the nomadic pastoral group takes to sedentary life. When a Basseri household encounters serious loss of their wealth of heards of animals, they are sloughed off by impoverishment and consequently they have to take to temporary and

seasonal occupations open to them, such as working for harvesting, guarding winter crops, or to shephered for a village flok, or using their donkeys for local transport etc. When they are associated closely with the village people, they develop intimate bonds with village folk which may ultimately lead their eventual integration into sedentary communities in the status of property-less villagers.

It may be observed that the case of nomads moving in villages, towns and cities of India is a little different from the pastoral nomads. These nomadic groups provide goods and services to the people in the villages. In this context Misra's observations are apt in the Indian situation. He says, "On account of the various social, political and economic changes, the nomadic populations the world over show a tendency to settle down. This has been marked in India too .... The village scene in India is changing fast. Improved means of communications, improved varieties of agricultural tools and implements, the spread of education and more frequent contacts between the different groups of people are affecting the way of life of the people in the villages. As a result of these changes, it is expected that the demand of the goods and services as offered by the nomads would get adversely affected. These changes and the change in the world view of the people living in the villages in turn are expected to affect the nomads in many ways, one of which may be that they take to settled life" (1970 : 151).

As may be seen from the observations of several scholars it may be noted that the process of sedentarization has been taking place among several nomadic groups. It would be worthwhile to examine the process of sedentarization among the Killekyatha in the context of their nomadism. An attempt is made in this section to describe the process of sedentarization with the help of genealogies and a genealogical chart in which four cases of the earlier settlers of the village, that is, Kalikapur are given.

When checks were made through the genealogies of the heads of all the 46 families, it was found that all the 46 families are covered in the genealogies of 31 families. The number of the heads of the families leading nomadic and settled life at the level of two ascending generations from the ego's generation—ego being the head of the family in each case, were noted, and the same is shown in Table 12. It may be noted from the said Table that there are cases of persons leading nomadic and settled life at different generations. If the data shown in the above table are further analysed in terms of percentages of different categories leading nomadic and settled life at the two ascending generational levels, the following pictures emerge as given in Table 13.

Table 12 : *Generationwise distribution of nomadic and settled families*

Categories and number of families at the egos' generation		Number of Genealogies covered (of egos)	Categories and number of families from egos' 1st ascending generation			Categories and number of families from egos' IInd ascending generation		
			Nomadic	Settled	Total	Nomadic	Settled	Total
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Nomadic families								
(i) Counted	26	20	15	5	20	13	7	20
(ii) Not counted*	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	27							
2. Settled families								
(i) Counted	15	11	6	5	11	8	3	11
(ii) Not counted*	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	19							
		31	21	10	21	21	10	31

* The family where a woman is the head of the family is not taken into account in this analysis.

Table 13 : *Percentage distribution of nomadic and settled categories according to generations*

Categories and generations	Categories					
	Nomadic			Settled		
	No. of families	Total number	Percentage.	No. of families	Total number	Percentage.
1. *Nomadic families*						
(*i*) Egos' Ist Ascending generation	15	20	75	5	20	25
(*ii*) Egos' IInd Ascending generation	13	20	65	7	20	35
2. *Settled families*						
(*i*) Egos' Ist Ascending	6	11	55	5	11	45
(*ii*) Egos' Ind Ascending generation	8	11	72	3	11	28

From the above table it may be observed that in the case of the nomadic categories 75% of heads of the egos' first ascending generation followed nomadic life and only 25% lead settled life ; the picture for the second ascending generation is that 65% lead nomadic life and 35% lead settled life. That means among the nomadic categories there has been a slight increase i.e., 10% towards continuing nomadic life from the second ascending generation to next descending generation. In the case of the settled categories, it may be noted that in the second ascending generation 72% lead nomadic life which has come down to 55% in the next descending generation. Thus, if the data is analysed for the Killekyatha of Kalikapur it may be said that, by and large, the nomadic families continue to lead nomadic life and those of the settled families have been continuing to lead settled life. The situation explained here for the entire data is complex, and it reveals that there has been generally the tendency of the nomadic and settled families to perpetuate their respective ways of life. Nevertheless, the trend among the settled categories as we have said earlier is inclined towards settling down from the second ascending to next descending generation though in a small measure. We shall later take up the point why nomadic families continue to lead nomadic lie in the specific context of sedentarization. In the meanwhile, we would describe the

four cases of early settlers in Kalikapur village, and show the frequency of occurences of nomadic and settled categories in different generations.

Cases relating to migration and settlement

An elderly Kshatriya of Kalikapur village (over seventy years old) said that the migration of the Killekyatha to Kalikapur village had taken place in the first part of the twentieth century. His father used to tell him that about three or four families of the Killekyatha were found to be living in huts at the present site which then was a grazing land. The Killekyatha were regarded then as 'criminals' and were dreaded. But the Kshatriya elders who were powerful at that time encouraged the Killekyatha to settle down for their own interest. Till about fifty years ago, the Killekyatha had the semblance of a house or a house site in this village ? Strong mud houses commonly found in the area began to be constructed within the last thirty years or so. An elderly village servant (*valekar*) gave almost the same description of the Killekyatha's migration and settlement at Kalikapur.

When the genealogies of all the Killekyatha were recorded it was identified that the four cases described here were the first settlers ; Data upto grand parental generation from the egos was possible to gather Consulting records relating to land possession were considered useful for the present description.

It may be noted that from the land records of Kalikapur village available for the years 1940-53, only four families had owned lands during that period. All the four persons who were owners of lands are dead now. One of the elders was alive at the time of my fieldwork in 1970. He stated that he had bought 19 acres of forest lands for Rs. 300 sometime in 1930's and since he used to move in the villages, he had given them to the peasants for cultivation. He sold his lands in 1955 for he had incurred debts. He bought lands worth 2-31 acres with the money he saved after deducting the debts and making payments to his two brothers who had made claims for the property. As far as his family was concerned, they had migrated to Kalikapur in his grandfather's time. He did not know the place from where they had migrated. He also stated that the ancestors of other three families had migrated almost at the same time at his grandfather's generation.

The genealogical chart gives cases of the four families who were supposed to be the first settlers. Data for the two ascending generations from the egos are given in the chart. The names of the first settlers are mentioned. It may be observed from the cases given in the chart that the names of the ancestors of egos, such as, Subanappa, Ramji, Teerthappa and Hanumappa indicate that they were the people belonging to other

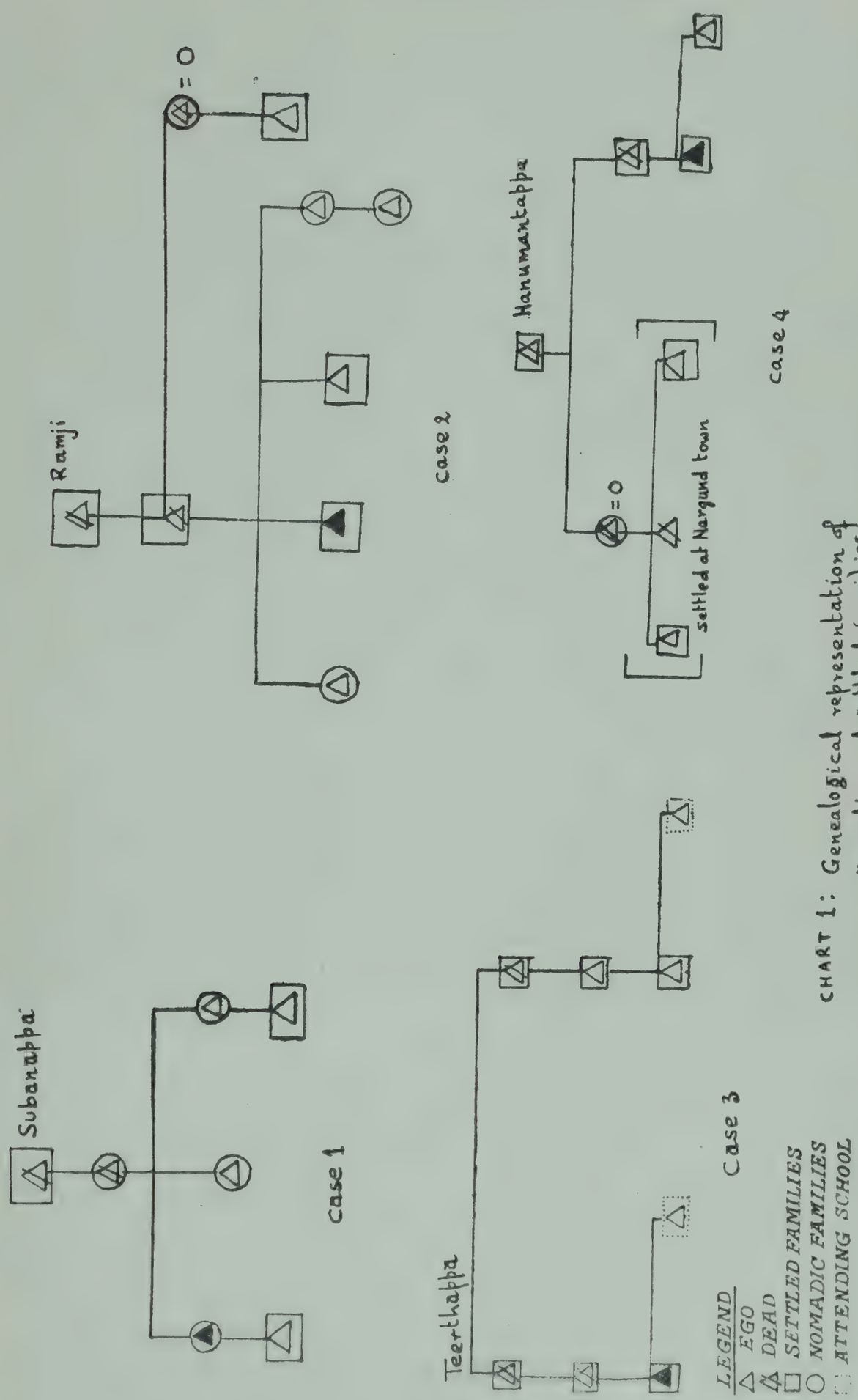


CHART 1: Genealogical representation of nomadic and settled families

places as none of the names are identified with the deities of Kalikapur. It is said that usually the names of the deities of the villages or base camps from where migration takes place are given to the people. From the list

of the names, it may be noted that names of the chief deities, i.e., Kalikamma of Kalikapur village are given to some persons at the parental and egos' generation which is indicative of their identification with the village of their migration. Thus, the point of identity to a particular place of migration is important for understanding the process of sedentarization.

The cases shown in the genealogical chart indicate that there are instances of the Killekyatha taking to settled life in one generation, and to nomadic life is the next generation[1]. Even in one single generation it was noted that some members of a family take to settled life and a few others to nomadic life. In case 1 in the chart, it may be noted that the ego and his father were stated to have been leading nomadic life, but his grandfather had settled down. The ego's son, who had joined military service returned to Kalikapur after his retirement and has started leading settled life. Ego's two brothers have been leading nomadic life while one of the older sons of the ego's youngest brother is leading a settled life. The latter is a youth of 22 years of age who is attending to the work of agricultural labour. But this boy is not happy to lead settled life as he has been allured of the better prospects in taking to the new occupation of repairing metal pots. Perhaps, he may take to nomadic life in future. But nothing is certain in his case.

In case 2 of the genealogical chart there are examples of both the categories. But in case 3, members at all the generational level have been found to lead settled life. The main reason for such a situation in this particular family was stated to be that since their first settlement at Kalikapur, the grand parents had shown much interest in agricultural work as they had not learnt their traditional occupations, *viz.*, leather picture shows, and fastening selvage of blankets. In their job of agriculture, the ego's father had earned a good name. Taking to agriculture helped the members of their family to lead settled life at Kalikapur. Besides taking to self cultivation, the ego and other adult members mentioned in case 3 have been found to work as agricultural labourers in the fields of other peasants in Kalikapur and nearby villages. The 4th case has a different story to tell. The ego's father's father was well known for farming which was done by employing two pairs of bullock. It was considered prestigious at that time to have agriculture with two pairs of bullock. But owing to family feuds the lands were fragmented and their successors could not properly manage the lands. Bullocks were sold, and the family suffered. Since then, one of the sons at the first ascending generation of the ego had started leading nomadic life and the other continued to lead settled life. The one who had taken to nomadic life died young and his three sons had to leave Kalikapur and lead nomadic life along with their mother during their childhood. When they became adults, they got jobs in a private

mill as casual labourers at Nargund. One of the sons had died recently. The two sons have now settled down at the place of their work, while their mother now stays at Kalikapur. The youngest son, however, fells that he should return to Kalikapur and take to some jobs like agricultural labour, or follow one of the two 'nomadic occupations'. He knows the work of fastening selvage of blankets. Now he wants to learn the job of repairing metal pots. The work at the mill where he is employed is strenuous according to him compared to 'nomadic occupations' followed by their people. His mother's stay at Kalikapur is another consideration for his preference. But he is yet to take dicision in the matter. The ego in case 4 was once leading nomadic life but later took to settled life by taking up a job of *hamali* (casual labour) at Nargund. Four years ago, he returned to Kalikapur, got his ancestral house repaired and he has been leading settled life in the village since then. He does the work of *hamali* at the shop of the Lingayat rich man of the village. His younger brother who is not physically well to undertake nomadic life has been staying at the village since childhood. He works mainly as an agricultural labourer in the village.

Now, two important questions arise, such as, why a certain number of families continue to lead nomadic life, and under what conditions sedentarization take place. These questions need to be answered. The following description aims to discuss these aspects very briefly.

As said earlier, the first settlers found Kalikapur village a suitable place for permanent settlement for they got support from the then Kshatriya headman initially to settle down. The latter permitted these families to build their huts. As the settlement at Kalikapur grew with the increase in population, there were migrations of the Killekyatha from other villages also. Most of the migrations have taken place in the ego's generation. Migration to Kalikapur by the Kallekyatha of other villages in most cases took place mainly owing to affinal bonds. Availability of house sites was also another reason for such migrations. The data show that out of 46 families, 26 families are the descendants of the earlier and later settlers whose members claim to belong to Kalikapur. Among the remaining 20 families, 11 migrated from Narsapur village in Belgaum district, 4 each from Bankaneri and Hebbal respectively, and one from Antapur—the latter three villages are from Bijapur district.

As we have described in the chapters on "Economic Organization", and "Values and Worldview", the Killekyatha particularly, those who continue to lead nomadic life do not like to work in the fields as agricultural labourers. To work in agricultural fields one has to work in the sun and rains. In winter, they have to get up early and go to the fields, and face the cold. When they work in the fields, they have to obey the

orders of their employers. They are paid daily wages for their work which is not considered adequate for the services rendered. Though they have to face many difficulties while leading a nomadic life, such as, unsuitable camping place, lack of privacy, non-availabiliy of fuel for cooking, etc., as already described, they feel assured of procuring work. The work in their specialized occupations by the nomadic families of the Kallekyatha is done in 'shade' as opposed to the 'open hot sun' as they find the head sometimes unbearable. Besides, while following these occupations they are not being ordered about by anybody. If they want to work then they can do so. They resist pressure of any kind. Sometimes they do suffer. Sometimes they take up work for a part of the day and the remaining part they spend by taking rest. When a Killekyatha earns a good sum he would return to Kalikapur where he would spend his earnings as he would be simply passing the time in a leisurly way. This is possible only if they followed 'nomadic occupations' as they get better remuneration for their work which is certainly higher than the labour charges for working in a field. Thus, the economic aspect as well as their attitude are the guiding factors which make the Killekyatha to take to 'nomadic occupations' and continue to lead nomadic life.

Among the Killekyatha the processes of sedentarization has set in since long by a few families settling in Kalikapur as discussed earlier. As has been noted, the economic circumstances as well as their values and worldview have made some to continue to lead a life of nomadism and others to lead sedentary life as some families are trying to do, by changing their economic activities. Taking to agriculture is one such economic activity which necessitates a community or a family to lead sedentary life if one has to intensely take to farming by oneself. For a systematic farming, and to have complete dependence on it, a Killekyatha family would have to have a minimum of 16 to 20 acres of fertile lands in the area. The other occupations like agricultural labour, or odd labour do not attract them, particularly those belonging to the nomadic families.

Under conditions of nomadism, the Killekyatha find it difficult to send their children to school. In some cases, the children have been given some schooling by keeping their children in the houses of their kin at Kalikapur or some other places but for many nomadic families it is not possible to make such arrangements. Sendentraization becomes possible by an individual if one got education, and also got a job. Now-a-days among the Killekyatha, 'movement' by members takes place at the level of an individual family, and so also the process of sedentarization. Taking to sedentarization by individual families has its impact upon other individual families also and, in course of time, more number of nomadic families may be influenced by those of the settled ones, and

perhaps, the trends towards sedentarization may be more prominent. Of course, it is not uncommon to notice that the reverse process of some settled families taking to nomadic life in individual cases as happening.

An important dimension of the problem of nomadism and sedentarization is that due to economic, demographic, and political cnditions, nomadic communities may take to sedentarization, and similarly sedentary communities may take to nomadic life. Barth (1961) has demonstrated it from his material on the Basseri tribe. He says that when there is an impoverishment of the flocks and dearth of pasture, many a Basseri might take up other occupations among the sedentary communities and thus become sedentarized. Greater flow of population similarly affects the nomadism of the Basseri. Political conditions aloso have an impact. Barth remarks " .. The rates of movements into and out of the villages are according to the Basseri sensitive to economic and political conditions : in times of peace and strong administration the flow towards the villages increases, while in times of economic stress and choas, such as, Persa has experienced at regular intervals throughout her history till today, villagers and even whole sedentary communities may assume nomadic life. The over-all balance, however, as judged from my own materials and by Basseri, is over-whelmingly in the direction of sedentarization" (ibid : 118).

So far as the Killekyatha are concerned, though there has been the tendency for spontaneous sedentarization, continuance of leading nomadic life is also noticed. In Kalikapur, some of the youths have found economically advantageous to take to the new occupation of repairing metal pots and lead nomadic life while keeping their options open to settle down. Usually, those who are old, and physically handicapped, and also women have been found to be taking to settled life. There are few adult members whose parents and grand parents were agriculturists have opted for sedentary life, and follow agriculture as their primary means of livelihood. In the case of nomadic families change in certain economic pursuits and change in value system are required for sedentarization. The value orientation like that of 'working under shadow' as is possible under conditions of light 'nomadic occupations' of the Killekyatha, as against the hard work of 'toiling in agricultural fields in the hot sun', for instance, needs necessary change in order to settle down. Perhaps, condsiderable time gap is needed for such changes to take place. As already stated some nomadic families had taken to settled life since fifty years or so, and established a permanent base at Kalikapur. Though there is scope for the members of individual families of the settled categories to take to nomadic life also should the exigency arise, in as much as the nomadic families to settle down, the trend, generally, is towards spontaneous sedentarization.

NOTES

1 Barth (1961 : 116-117) has used genealogical method for describing the cases of sedentazrization in a family. This method was found to be very useful in delineating cases of sedentarization as well as those of nomadic life in the description of the Killekyatha.

CHAPTER VIII

TRENDS OF CHANGE

Misra *et al* (1971 : 1) in their detailed study on nomadic people in Mysore city refer to the various itinerant groups moving in the Indian countryside as playing a variety of roles handed down to them through generations. He quotes Singer (1955) and Raghavan (1959) who emphasize the role of these itinerant groups. Singer considers the itinerant groups as travelling specialists who provide a variety of cultural speialists in the villages. Raghavan treats them as one of the media of popular religious instruction. Viewed from this angle, the Killekyatha, as we have seen, are the travelling cultural specialists. They, by means of epical narration through their traditional leather picture shows, are the agents and carriers of the cultural content of great tradition. Not only that, they have also incorporated several ideas of the local tradition which is reflected in their epical narration and other story telling. About a few decades back, this itinerant group moved from one village to the other, mainly showing their art of leather picture shows, and thus, their role as travelling cultural specialists was so great that in the villages where they moved, they were able to spread the cultural content of the two great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, as it was handed down to them through generations. Because of their particular emphasis on the Mahabharata, these people were called as 'Pandava people', and many Killekyathas even today like to be considered as such.

It was noted that greater conact with the local people, improvement in the communications, urbanization, facilities of modern education, etc. have brought about certain changes in the life style of the Killekyatha. My attempt in this section will be to delineate certin important changes in their economic, socio-political, and religious life in the broader context of their nomadism and their role as cultural specialists.

ECONOMIC CHANGE

In the earlier days the occupation of leather picture shows flourished during festivals and harvest seasons, when rural folk would encourage such activities of folk art and entertainment. The Killekyatha artists were suitably rewarded in kind then. The Killekyatha also combined with the art another occupation, namely, that of the fastening selvage of blankets as an all-season occupation. With these two occupations by men, and tattooing and stitching of quilts out of rags by their women, enalbed the Killekyatha to depend upon these occupations for their livelihood.

But during the last two decades or so, the art of leather picture shows has been adversely affected owing to the popularisation of the cinema in urban centres. The settled communities now regard the leather picture shows as generally a lower form of entertainment in comparison with the cinema and professional theatre. Reportedly, the art has lost the kind of appeal it had even in the villages and as such there is not much demand from the villagers for such shows. Though the artist has also combined with this occupation the occupatin of fastiening selvage of blankets the latter does not provide much scope for earning his livelihood as this type of work is not available in plenty. The leather picture show is an art wherein capacity for singing and proper narration of humorous anecdotes is necessary. Because of this specific requirement, many a Kille kyatha are not able to take to it, may be, for want of talent. At present, in the Kalikapur village only some members belonging to two families are pursuing the profession of leather picture shows, of course, combined with the occupation of fastening selvage of blankets. Those who preferred to settle down have taken to cultivation and agricultural labour.

When the Killekyatha noticed that there was not much economic advantage in following their traditional occupations under the changed circumstances, a few youths took to a new occupation, namely, that of repairing metal pots, and this found favour with many among the nomadic families. As the new occupation could be followed while people continued with their nomadism, as has been stated earlier, the alternative choice so far lacking came as an innovation. As the economic benefits from the new occupation were greater, being more paying and an all-season activity and as it did not involve any change in their nomadic life, it attracted many people, especially the youth to its fold. The new occupation does involve training and a small capital investment. The emerging youth leaders are helping others to learn the necessary skills. Since the capital investment is less than forty rupees, those desirous of taking to it seek and get the financial assistance either from the person who trains them or some people (businessmen) of Kalikapur.

As far as the occupation followed by women are concerned, it has been seen that the market for tattooing has declined as the women of sedentary communities do not any longer care for elaborate tattooing as once they used to do. But there is still demand for quilts stitched by Killekyatha women. There are three cases of educated people, who have taken to jobs in government and other organisations.

With these occupational changes, the role of the Killekyatha artist as a travelling cultural specialist is being relegated to the background. Infact, today there is only one family at Kalikapur whose members are proficient in the art and are invited for giving their shows. There are also

cases of a few persons, who do not have the required degree of proficiency and hence they are not invited for giving any performances, nor have these persons found it worth while to make any effort to improve their skills.

SOCIO-POLITICAL CHANGES

The Killekyatha used to have extended families in earlier days and this was useful in giving cultural performances where assistance of a number of people was required. They used to move from one village to another in small groups consisting mainly of their near kin. The sole dependence on the occupation of fastening selvage of blankets, the acceptance of the new occupation of repairing metal pots, the process of sedentatization have largely contributed to the breakdown of the extended family and it being supplanted by the nuclear family. We have observed that among the Killekyathas—both settled and nomadic—the family is a small, economically independent unit. Movements to villages are made by members of individual families as a unit. Due to the nuclearisation of the families the authority of elder has waned. The heads of individual nuclear families take their own decisions, especially concerning the matter of leading a nomadic or settled life, taking to various new occupations etc. These vital decisions were in earlier days usually taken by the heads of the extended or joint families. However, on the occasions like marriage and death and also at the time of pre and post natal treatments help from elder kin is sought.

About fifty years ago, they lived on the outskirts of the village, and they were considered as 'criminals'. Whenever they visited other villages it is said that the village servants (*valekar*) used to keep a strict eye on them and follow them everywhere. It is not uncommon even toady that such nomadic people like the Bhat, and Kunchi Korava are given the same treatment in the villages where they move. With the settlement of a few families at Kalikapur and with the leadership of late Subanappa the position of the Killekyatha has changed. Their constant articulation with the people of such communities like the Kshatriya, Kuruba (Shepherd), and Lingayats, the Killekyatha of Kalikapur ane treated differently. It is said that the Katabu, the counterpart of the Killekyatha of another Taluka in Bijapur district have not yet attained this position enjoyed by the Killekyatha of Kalikapur. Till about thirty years ago the Killekyatha were not allowed to draw water from the village public well at Kalikapur. There are two public wells in the village. One is meant for all communities including the Killekyatha except the Harijans and the other well is exclusively used by the Harijans. The Killekyatha during their errands are found to interact freely with the people of Kuruba caste. The menfolk interdine with the menfolk of the Kuruba caste. But women of the Kuruba

caste do not dine with the women of the Killekyatha though the latter do accept food from the former. The association of the Killekyatha with the Maratha community is also responsible for the change.

With their greater identification with the Kalikapur village and encouragement received for leading settled life from a few influential families, the Killekyatha of the Kalikapur village have gained confidence of other communities. The late Subanappa who lead the people spiritually and had attained fame as a *Kirtankar* and as an artist of leather picture shows. His popularity brought good name to the Killekyatha. He revised the language part of the leather picture shows and also introduced instrumental music with some kinds of devotional songs popular in the area. The Killekyatha have accepted certain local customs in their rites of passage like singing 'solan' songs, inviting people of other communities during their marriages, building marriage pendals, employing musicians—some times arranging loud speakers playing cinema songs, serving only vegetarian food during marriage etc.

The Killekyatha settlement starting with four huts on the fringe of Kalikapur village and now there are 46 families claiming to have this village as their home. There are a number of mud houses which have sprong up during the last twenty years or so. The settlement has acquired a separate name as the 'Killekyathar vathar', and has become one of the units of the larger village.

The emerging leadership has been able to establish, though in a small way, greater contact with the people of higher castes who are influential in social, economic and political spheres. The new leadership is trying to seek some benefits in the form of cash grants for building houses and distribution of lands to their people. In case their efforts materialise, perhaps, more people might tend to settle down in the Kalikapur village.

RELIGION AND WORLDVIEW

With the migration to Kalikapur and process of sedentarization, the Killekyatha have taken some of the deities of the Kalikapur village in their pantheon. The Killekyatha once were perhaps worhsippers of only ancestral spirits, but their constant interaction with the people of sedentary communities in the area has made them accept the important deities of Kalikapur like Kalikamma and Hanumanta, and also Yallamma of Yallamma Hills in Saundatti in Belgaum district bear testimony to their religious attitude. They had in earlier days no centre for pilgrimage, but now they go on pilgrimage to Yallamma temple mentioned above. The late Subanappa was first disciple of Ramarudha Matha at Bagalkot in Bijapur district, who initiated many Killekyatha to become the disciples.

Usually these disciples—many are from anong the nomadic families—attend the annual celebrations held at the *Matha.*

In their worldview, the noticeable change is that of the idea of 'work is worship' (*Kayakave Kailas*) contained in the tenets of Veerasaivism which is prevalent in the area. The concepts of *Karma* and *Dharma* are understood in the simple sense of 'doing good to others, and giving gifts to the needy in the form of food, clothes and money'. These implicit ideas are the result of their closer interaction with people of the Kshatriya and Kuruba castes, and also their attendence at the various cultural performances like prayers, *Kirtana*, *Purana*, *Sivakatha*—performed by Brahmin, and non-brahmin culturals pecialists in the villages where they move.

To sum up, the Killekyatha once were travelling cultural specialists and were regarded as an 'outcaste' group of having criminal habits by the people of sedentary communities in the villages. The Socio-political changes, the economc betterment, changes in their religious beliefs, sedentarization, and their closer articulation with the people of other castes in a big village like Kalikapur have contributed to their acquiring a certain status. The people of Kalikapur now consider them as a caste of a similar status as the Kuruba caste. The Killekyatha participate in all socio-politico-religious functions of Kalikapur, and in the villages of the area of their movement. Though as a cultural specialist, the Killekyatha artist may not have the same importance as he used to have earlier, yet there is scope for improvement in this regard. But the Killekyatha themselves are going in for the newer occupations. The process of spontaneous sedentarization has been taking place. There are a significant number of nomadic families who continue to lead a nomadic life mainly due to the economic circumstance and value orientation. Over the last two generations, there is a tendency to settle down at the Kalikapur village by a number of Killekyatha. For a complete sedentarization, it is felt that certain requirements are to be fulfilled such as provision of sufficient quantity of lands for cultivation by individual families, better housing facilities, facilities for their children's education, suitable employment to the educated etc. Even among those settled, many a Killekyatha has been facing unemployment because of very small land holdings and as there is not enough demand for work as labourers in the agricultural fields. At the same time the settled people, are disinclined to take to nomadic life. Thus, the settled families generally prefer to continue with a settled life. On the other hand the nomadic families find it more profitable to continue with that mode of life despite its hardships. But at the same time they have also realised the advantages of a settled life which would enable them to educate their children, acquire some agricultural land in due course, establish closer contact with people of other higher castes, and acquire a

higher status for themselves, secure better employment for their children in government or other institutions, and so on. Thus, it may be observed that a nomadic group, in course of time, may try to settle down in order to acquire a place in the social structure of a village.

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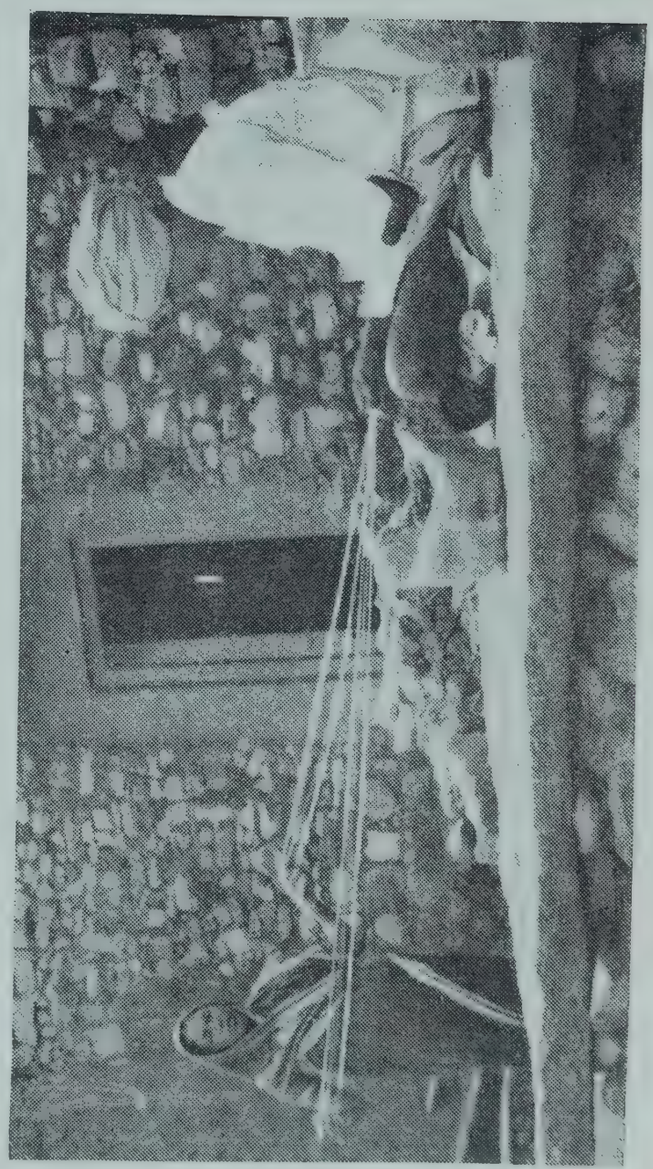
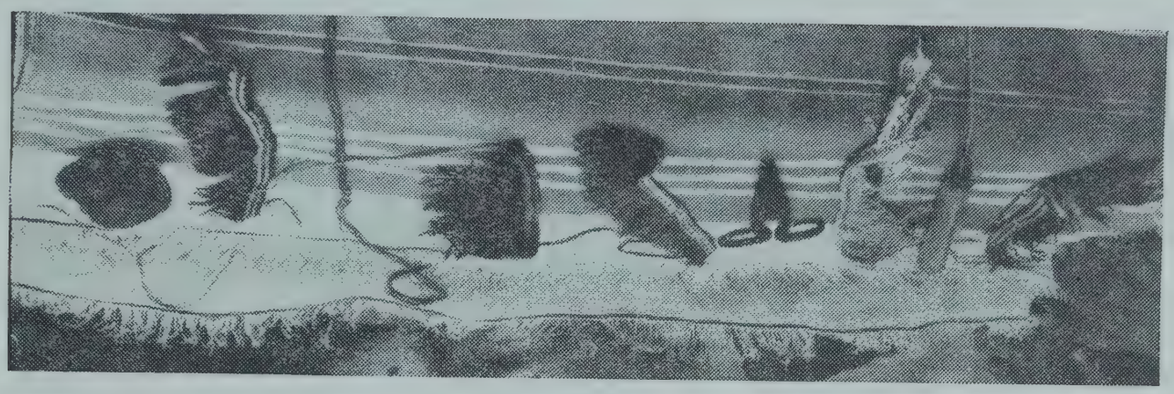
Twining thread by means of native bobbin



A Killekyatha couples engaged in fastening selvage of blankets

Leather picture of Bheema (Character in the Mahabharata)

Stage for exhibiting leather picture shows



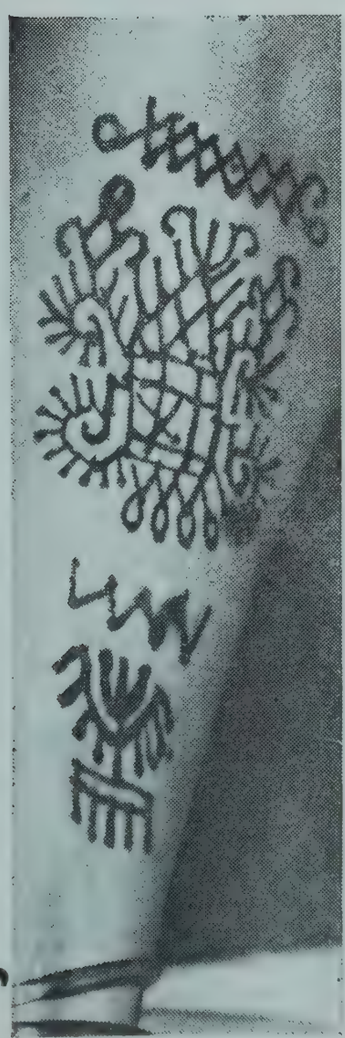
Coloured threads used for 'fastening selvage of blankets and chadars'

Leather picture of Keachaka (Character in the Mahabharata)

Leather picture of Draupadi (Character in the Mahabharata)

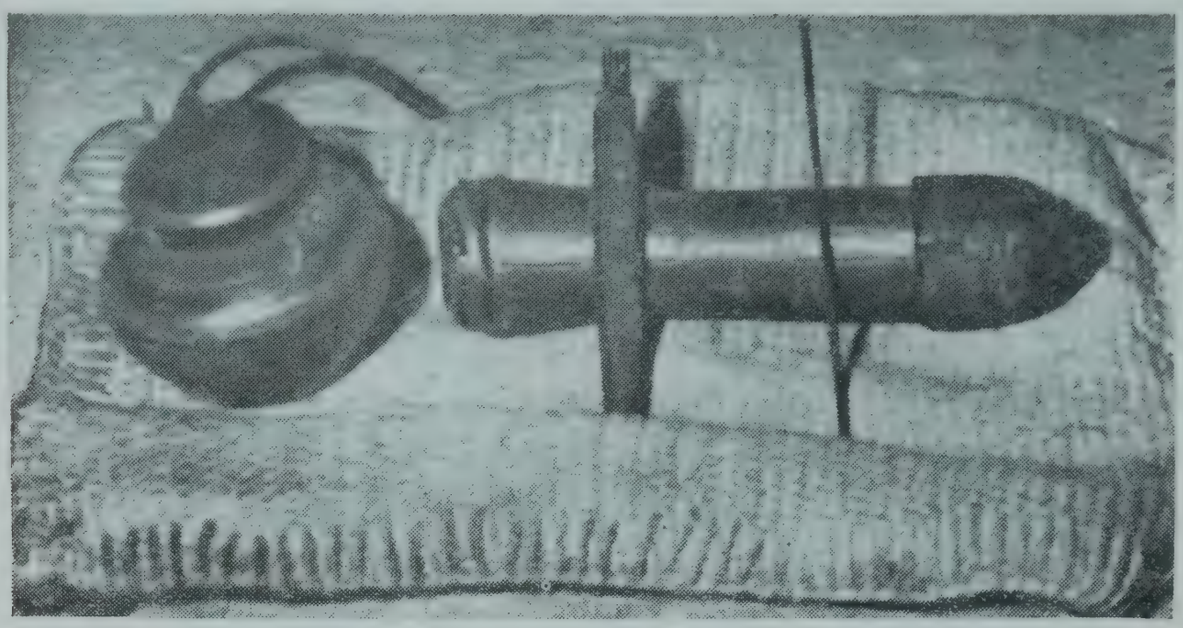
Arrangement of rags for 'Stitching a Quilt'

Stitching a quilt



Technique of tattooing

Tattoo designs on hand



Tools used for tattooing

TATTOO DESIGNS

Chariot at Hampi

Cradle of god Rama

Peacock

Scorpion (little ones)

Scorpion of hill country

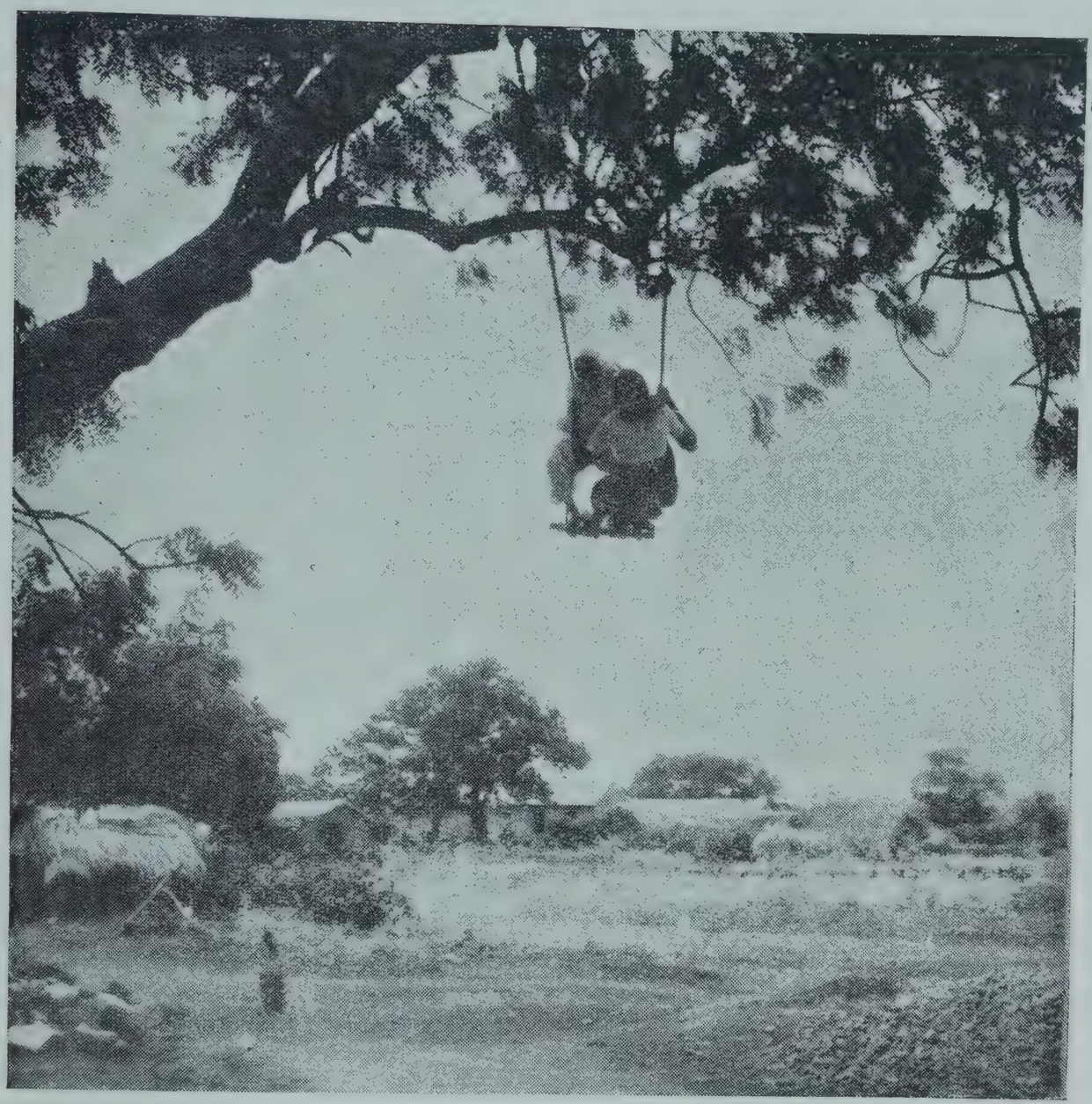
Plaited hair of mendicant

Creepers of grape

The workshop of a Killekyatha for repairing metal pots

Removing dents in a metal pot

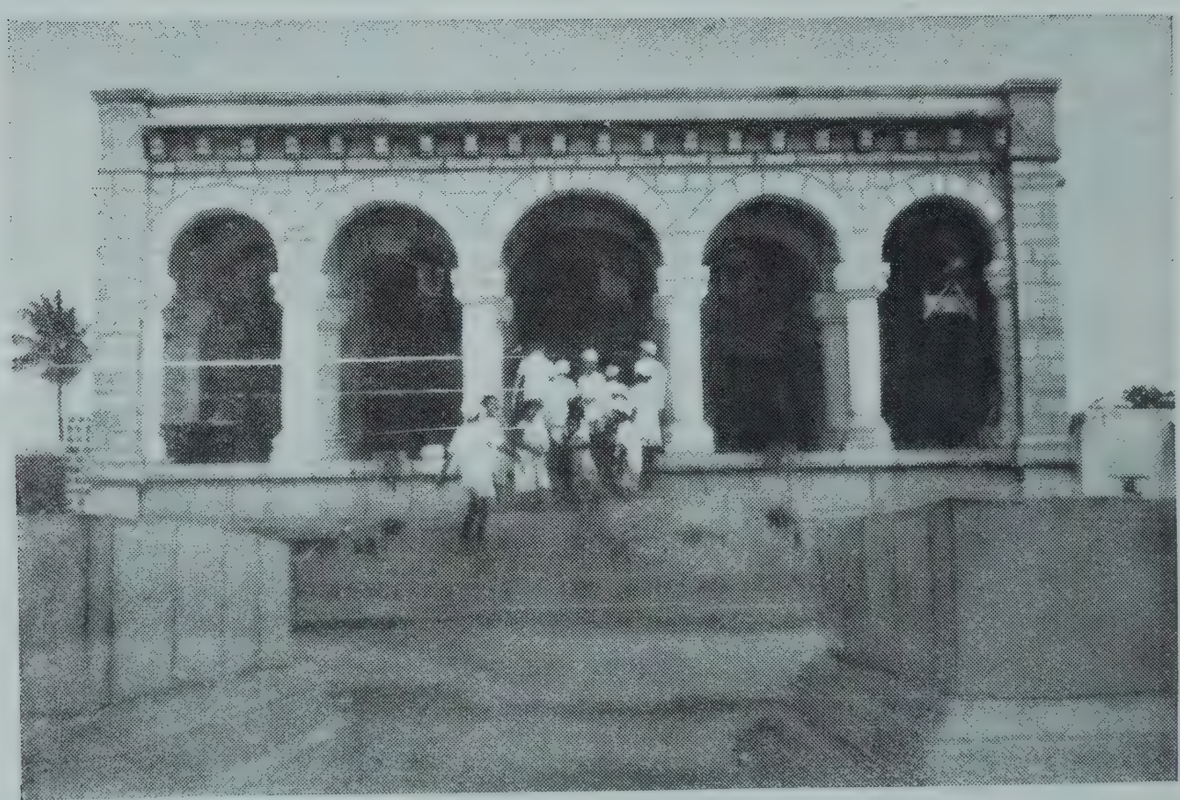
A Killekyatha at work in his forge



Swinging on gokali (Swing) is common during the festival of Nagpanchami

Houses of the Killekyatha in their settlement

A Killekyatha women devotee of Yellemma deity



Temple of the Kalikamma—Village goddess of Kalikapur

Going to a field with the bullock

The Vathar of the Killekyatha—A Scene